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ABSTRACT

This book discusses primary education of the poor in the city of Mumbai, India. It focuses on the city of Mumbai itself and the poor who live in it, answering questions such as What makes the city the way it is? What does it mean to be poor in Mumbai? and How does the poverty of the poor in Mumbai affect their chances of receiving a basic education? The book examines the different implications for public authorities in relation to their role in providing primary education, as well as their relations with the various other players--private and public--working with the poor. The book begins with an examination of the interplay among poverty, education, and the city. It then reviews the roles of the two major entities working for the attainment of universal education: the Municipal Corporation, which includes the department of education, and nongovernmental organizations. The book concludes by highlighting some of the areas where change is clearly needed and by making suggestions on how to bring about these changes. The text is supplemented by many tables, graphs, charts, and summaries of important points. (WFA)

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School mapping and local-level planning

Primary education for all in the City of Mumbai, India

The challenge set by local actors

Nalini Juneja

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Nalini Juneja

International Institute for Educational Planning

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BMED	Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Education Department
CDO	Community Development Officer
DSS	Doorstep School
EMIS	Education Management Information System
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
MCGM	Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai
MIS	Management Information System
NFE	Non-formal Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
SCERT	State Council for Educational Research and Training
UEE	Universalization of Elementary Education
UPE	Universalization of Primary Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This monograph, on the challenge faced by local actors in the primary education of the poor in the city of Mumbai, takes a look, first of all, at the two leading actors on this primary education scene – the city of Mumbai itself and the poor who live in it. What makes Mumbai the way it is today? What does it mean to be poor in Mumbai? How does the poverty of the poor in Mumbai affect their chances of receiving even a basic education? How does all this affect the primary education scene in the city today? After focusing on the interplay between the city, the poverty and the scene of primary education in the first and second chapters, this monograph goes on to review, in the subsequent chapters, the roles of two major supporting actors – the governmental organizations (the Municipal Corporation) and the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) – in terms of the part they play in trying to make universal primary education a reality in this city.

The contexts of the lives of the poor and the conditions, in which their children live and study, make the achievement of primary education an uphill task indeed. The conditions of life in the slums, and the lack of adequate support whether from home or from school, indicate that the cards are already stacked against the probability of the children of the poor staying in school even until the end of Class IV, let alone completing higher levels of schooling.

The Education Department of the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika (Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai) controls a huge administrative machinery to provide free primary schooling to the children of Mumbai, in eight media of instruction. Yet, it acknowledges that there is still much to be done before it can say it has achieved its motto of 'Every School Beautiful, Every Child in School and Every Child Learning'. The northward-drifting population of the city dares the municipal schools to keep up with it. The teachers in municipal schools have a harder task than most, in view of the fact that the home environments of the children are unable to provide educational support. As everywhere else, money is also a problem because 96 per cent of the budget goes towards teachers' salaries.

The Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Education Department (BMED) acknowledges that on its own it has its limitations in being able to reach each and every child. Therefore it is trying to build partnerships with voluntary organizations to meet the challenges faced in achieving universal elementary education in Mumbai. Accordingly, in Mumbai, governmental and non-governmental organizations are seen working together for the education of the poor. With the advent of NGO, government and donor collaboration on the scene, it appears reasonable to assume that we shall be witness to a new era of role relationships in providing primary education to the poor.

The happy coexistence of a multitude of organizations all working for the poor invites the question: what does this mean for the role of government departments, both in terms of their relationship with the NGOs and in terms of their own role in providing primary education? This question is also explored in this monograph.

Despite the valiant efforts being made by the NGOs as well as by the Municipal Corporation, illiteracy, non-enrolment, drop-out and stagnation continue to plague the system. Such a situation raises a number of questions related to what needs to be done. Does the answer lie in doing more of the same, or does the lack of success point to the need to do things differently? Unfortunately no one really knows the answer. But, on the other hand, there are some things that observers on the scene would suggest could be done differently, and they could point to certain other areas where more intensified effort is needed. This monograph highlights some of the areas where a change is needed and attempts to answer the question that emerges, i.e. to what extent may one be justified in the hope that the needed change is forthcoming?

I. THE CONTEXT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN MUMBAI

Mumbai – The City

Not too many people outside India may be familiar with the new name Mumbai for the city of Bombay. But 'Bombay' is well known as an important port city in India, a major financial centre, the Hollywood of the East, and as 'isn't that the place where they made that film, "Salaam Bombay", you know the one about that poor street kid ...?'. Yes, Mumbai (it has been officially 'Mumbai' since 1996) is all of this – a modern, bustling, mega-city with a downside of poverty, slums, and children on the streets (and at work) when they should be at school.

Mumbai, as a city of commercial importance, alone accounts for 20 per cent of the total economy in India's organized industry and the city ports handle 40 per cent of India's total foreign trade (Jain, 1996). Though it is the political capital of the State of Maharashtra in India, it can be described as the country's financial capital. In relation to its home State of Maharashtra, though Mumbai accounts for only 0.12 per cent of the area of the state, it houses 13 per cent of its population, 37 per cent of its urban population, 48 per cent of its registered working factories, and accounts for 52 per cent of the average daily employment in industries (Sita, 1998).

The economic activities of the city, first as a port, then as the centre for the country's textile industry, attracted migrants from nearby rural districts and from other states of the country – making Mumbai the culturally diverse, linguistically varied and over-populated city that it is today.

However, it was as a port city that its importance was first exploited by the British, even before the establishment of British colonial rule in India. Early records of the city describe it as a group of seven small islands inhabited by fishermen and under the control of the Sultan of Gujarat. When the Sultan of Gujarat succumbed to the Portuguese in 1534, these islands fell into European hands. The Portuguese later presented the islands to England as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza on her marriage to Charles II.

In the following years, the requirements of British commerce and industry dictated the choice of Bombay as the principal port of entry on India's western coast. Subsequent historical events played a decisive role in the shaping of its development as a major commercial city with jobs for many. The American civil war in 1861-1864 cut off the supply of raw cotton to mills in Britain and Indian cotton was in demand as a substitute. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 brought Mumbai closer to Europe and the newly constructed railway lines in India enabled the textile mills of Mumbai to effectively tap its cotton-growing hinterland (Sita, 1998).

Nineteenth-century migrants came principally from the areas which are today included in the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat. Workers from the coastal Konkan strip and from the Western Ghats – along the country's western shores, manned the docks and the cotton textile mills. Most of the business and trading groups came from Gujarat (Patel, 1995). In the twentieth century, and particularly after the independence of India, new waves of migrants came first from neighbouring lands that became part of Pakistan and from North and South India.

The population of Mumbai first crossed the million mark in 1921 and was 6 million by 1971. By the year 2000 AD it was expected that the city would have more than 16 million people and it is expected to be the second most populous city in the world by 2015 AD (Sita, 1998).

Table I.1. Mumbai: growth in population (1951-1991)

Year	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
Population	2,994,444	4,152,056	5,970,575	9,243,405	9,925,891

Source: Census of India (1991).

According to the latest census (1991), Mumbai had a population of 9.92 million (see *Table I.1*). It was found that the female population had grown by 27.15 per cent in the previous 10 years, while the male population grew by only 17.34 per cent in the same period. The reason for this change in the gender composition of the population is very significant and marks a milestone for a city historically regarded as a city of migrants. In 1951 there were 603 females for every 1,000 males (i.e. a sex ratio of 603) in the city. Since then, the sex ratio has balanced out to 818 females per 1,000 males, indicating that Mumbai's population is becoming more settled, with females replacing the 'all male' households of previous years (see *Table I.2*).

Table I.2. Mumbai: sex ratio as compared to Maharashtra and India (1951-1991)

Year	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
Mumbai	603	663	716	772	818
Maharashtra	941	936	930	937	934
All India	946	941	930	934	927

Source: Census of India (1991).

India's division into federal states is largely on a linguistic basis. Thus, migration from other states implied that each group of migrants also brought with them their own distinct culture and language. So much so that less than half of the population of the city is Marathi speaking, although in the rest of Maharashtra, Marathi is spoken by 73.2 per cent of the population. Furthermore, since Indian society is noted for its social exclusiveness among different caste and ethnic groups, ethnicity became an established basis for the development of the spatial and residential pattern of Bombay City (D'Souza, 1996). This linguistic, social, occupational and economic ethnicity, had, and continues to have, as shall be seen, implications for the problems and issues facing the universalization of primary education in the city today.

Not only are these migrants poor, with low levels of education, and engaged in petty jobs, but linguistic groups hailing from the far-off regions of northern and southern India, speaking languages such as Hindi, Urdu, Tamil and Telugu, are grossly over-represented in undesirable living areas.

Less than half of the population of Mumbai, i.e. about 42 per cent, has Marathi as mother tongue; 14 per cent have Gujarati as mother tongue; almost 15 per cent, Hindi; 12 per cent, Urdu; and the remainder, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Sindhi, and Konkini, among 22 other languages (Census, 1991) spoken by the homeless, slum- and pavement-dwelling populations. However, a much larger proportion of them belong to the non-Marathi-speaking population. D'Souza (1996) cites micro-level studies to show, for example, that while there were only 2.6 per cent Tamilians among the city population, 15 per cent Tamilians were found among slum dwellers and 15.7 per cent among the pavement dwellers. Similarly, Urdu speakers, who represented 9.6 per cent of the city population in the Census, were found to constitute 24 per cent of the slum dwellers and 22 per cent of the pavement dwellers.

In the case of Mumbai, unlike in the Western world, it is not the highly educated, highly skilled and highly motivated entrepreneurs who migrated to the metropolis. Rather, "It is the masses of illiterate, semi-literate, and unskilled persons who are compelled to migrate to the metropolis of Bombay. Such kind of migration does not lead to a structural shift of the labour force from the rural agricultural sector to the urban industrial sector, nor to a qualitatively higher level of labour-force transformation in the nation's economy" (Mukherji, 1996).

Table I.3 illustrates how fast the city has grown compared to the rest of India. *Table I.3*, along with *Table I.4*, also shows that this rate of growth has now declined. This change too has brought with it problems of a different kind.

Table I.3. Mumbai: variation in population by decade (1951-1991)

Year	1951-1961 (%)	1961-1971 (%)	1971-1981 (%)	1981-1991 (%)
Mumbai	38.66	43.8	38.07	20.41
Mahatrahstra	23.60	27.46	24.54	25.73
All India	21.51	24.80	24.66	23.84

Source: Census of India (1991).

Table I.4. Mumbai: average annual exponential growth rate of population (1961-1991)

Year	1961-1971 (%)	1971-1981 (%)	1981-1991 (%)
Mumbai	3.63	2.23	1.86
Maharashtra	2.43	2.19	2.29
All India	3.21	3.83	3.09

Source: Census of India (1991).

In recent years, many of the textile mills, which were initially instrumental in attracting this vast population to Bombay, have been closing. The closure of these textile mills in the city has resulted in loss of employment for many and has contributed towards a relocation of the inhabitants towards parts of the city's newly developing suburbs further to the north. The unemployment of the main breadwinners in families, as well as the northward drifting of the population, are causing their own problems in terms of schooling for the children of the relocated settlers. NGOs interviewed by Kapadia (1996) report, "It is the women who are supporting the families. The men drink and spend most of their money on drink. The major problems are poverty, lack of work and low pay".

Thus it appears clear that:

- *Mumbai, over the years, has attracted a large population of poor, linguistically diverse, and semi-educated or illiterate migrants from different parts of India.* As a consequence, the providers of education are faced with linguistically diverse communities of illiterate or semi-literate people who are unable to provide their children with any academic support. As parents they are neither able to appreciate the fact that learning implies continuity and sequence for integration, nor the importance of regular school attendance. Their children lack adequate role models to motivate them towards gaining an education.

- *The linguistic diversity of the population and the fact that primary education has to be in the medium of the child's mother tongue, has led to the need for a large range of languages.* In fact the Municipal Corporation schools in Mumbai offer primary schooling in eight different languages. Such diversity of provision cannot be accomplished without the related complicated process of school-location planning. Similarly, large resources are spent on ensuring that a sufficient number of trained teachers in all these languages are prepared, recruited, placed in the right schools, supervised, and evaluated in their language. When a language is no longer in demand, these teachers, whose jobs are permanent, still remain on the payroll.

- *The scarcity of land for housing, rising unemployment and the shifting northwards of the population of Mumbai have resulted in the dwindling of enrolment in some areas, while new schools constantly have to be set up in other areas.* The teacher/pupil ratios, too, vary correspondingly in different areas of the city. The phenomenon of shifting of the schools northwards will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter. At this point, it may suffice to highlight the implications of the population shift on the provision of schools. The loss of jobs in the textile mills, and their ancillary industries, and the consequent effects on the well-being of the family cannot but have adverse consequences for the children, their health and their education.

Mumbai – the conditions of life

More than half of the city's population live in slums or are altogether homeless. Kapadia (1996) points out that Mumbai property prices have been found to be the highest in the world. This amazing fact has to be kept in mind, she says, in order to understand why many lower middle-class and even middle-class people in Mumbai live in what can only be described as 'slum like conditions'. A number of surveys indicate that only half, or less than half, of Bombay's slum dwellers fall below the generally accepted poverty line (Patel, 1995). It is partly because the physical contexts of poverty are so different in urban areas, that the notion of poverty line-based on income and expenditure alone is too narrow to measure urban poverty, though this has been, and continues to be, the main way in which poverty is officially measured in India (Swaminathan, 1995; Kapadia 1997).

In urban areas, the living conditions of the poor are far more dependent, for example, on the services they are (or are supposed to be) provided with, namely piped water, electricity, sanitation and drainage. Further, in the urban context these are services that have to be paid for.

The over-crowded conditions in the city are related in part to the island character of the city, which set limits to the area in which the growing population could spread itself. This soon led to the aggravation of developmental problems, which began to manifest themselves in the form of population congestion, housing shortages, growth of the slum population, infrastructure inadequacies, soaring land values, and transportation hassles, etc. With a land area restricted to 603 square kilometres, Greater Bombay supports a density of 16,461 persons per square kilometre.

The scarcity of space compels people to scramble to find (and then struggle to retain) unoccupied spaces under bridges, along railway tracks, on pavements and even on rooftops. In the slums, they are crowded together in tight clusters of one-room huts. Much of the population does not have access to clean drinking water or to waste-disposal systems.

Swaminathan and Swaminathan (1995) found little correlation between incomes and access to facilities such as toilets and drinkable water. Unless its income is large enough to afford standard housing, a family apparently has little chance of securing better living standards, such as the availability of clean drinking water and toilets. It can be seen therefore that to be poor in Mumbai does not mean only having less income.

A Working Group on Urban Poverty which was set up by the Government of India deliberated on the meanings and manifestations of urban poverty in India and presented in its report that "Urban poverty cannot be characterized adequately in terms of income, expenditure or consumption patterns alone; since poverty is complex in meaning, texture, characteristics, impact and implications. The focus should be on the human *degradation* resulting from poverty". This Working Group suggested a multi-dimensional concept inclusive of the environment, access to services, and social and psychological supports.

Unless one can understand the context of the lives of the poor in Mumbai, it is not possible even to conceive of how their poverty can hamper their access to education, despite the availability of a system of free primary education. Or, how poverty and degraded living conditions can affect retention, drop-out, transition and achievement in school.

Housing

In Bombay, slum dwellers and the homeless account for over 50 per cent of the city's population, but they occupy less than 10 per cent of the city's land area. Non-standard housing in Mumbai has been described as being of three major types - chawls (one-room tenements), slums (authorized and unauthorized) and pavement dwellings.

Since slums can spring up almost overnight, the physical condition of adjoining areas can vary dramatically. Madhiwala and Jesani (1997) found that defining what constitutes a slum can be a matter involving considerable confusion, "because of the 'cheek by jowl' presence of high-, middle- and low-income settlements". They were studying the impact of work and environment on morbidity among women in Mumbai City. For the purposes of their study, they finally settled the matter of definition of a *slum* or *non-slum* on the basis of the *degradation of the immediate environment.* Settlements described as *'non-slum'* in their study were those that were characterized by covering of the drains adjoining the houses, paving of the common lanes between rows of houses and the separation of the garbage dumping and the defecation areas from the houses".

A *pavement dwelling* is even less of a refuge than a slum dwelling. Swaminathan (1995) describes one such shelter on the pavement of a road thus: "On Dimtimkar Road, a pavement dwelling is typically a small space enclosed on two sides by gunny sacks or old saris and covered on top by sack cloth, old sheets of plastic or, occasionally, tarpaulin and held up by a few wooden rods. The walls of the buildings adjoining the pavement provide a third wall to the pavement dwelling. The space available, around four by five feet, is just enough to seat the four or five members of the household. The front of the dwelling, or a part of it, is open, unprotected and faces the gutter". Even so, these 'lean-to' shelters, are at least near the household members' work.

Slums in Bombay have usually sprung up on land which is lying unused because of being unsuitable for property development for human habitation – such as low-lying marshy lands prone to flooding in monsoons, hill slopes, open spaces next to railway tracks, major roadways, near garbage dumps, under high-tension wires, etc. Mankhurd, one such slum area in the northwest of Mumbai, sits on low-lying land, which is prone to flooding in the high tide. It has been described as follows: "When the tide recedes it leaves behind all kinds of toxic waste, including carcasses of cattle and pigs in the swamp that surrounds the new tenements" (Swaminathan, 1995).

The land in the city is owned by five different authorities the: (i) Central Government, (ii) State Government, (iii) Bombay Municipal Corporation, (iv) Housing Board of Maharashtra and

(v) Private individuals. People are forced to live in slums in Mumbai not because there is no land, but because of poor planning. It has been argued by Patel (1995) that there is more than enough land. Slums occupy only a small portion of it. According to data collected by her in 1985, she had found slum dwellers were occupying only 2,000 out of the 43,000 hectares of land in the city while 10,000 acres of land were vacant. Government bodies, chiefly the Bombay Port Trust, owned much of this vacant land. Patel (1995) maintains that in 1995 the slums occupied only about 8 per cent of the land in Mumbai. Of the vacant land in possession of private builders, about 90 landlords owned 55 per cent of the land. Sundaram (1998) also acknowledges that the problem of urban management is compounded by the coexistence of a number of land-owning agencies of the central government in big cities, such as the Port Trust, Defence, Railways, International Airports Authority, Steel Townships, etc. which tend to operate independently of the city planning system.

One of the major problems raised is that while these central agencies often allow slums to come up on their vacant lands, they are reluctant to permit the provision of basic services to the slum dwellers or undertake *in situ* redevelopment of the slums (Sundaram, 1998).

The implication for locating schools near slum dwellings is obvious. If schools cannot be put up where slums come up, the children of these colonies will be deprived of access to primary education. This is indeed the case in many areas of Mumbai, and parents and children have to fight hard to arrange for expensive transportation to the nearest schools.

Box I.1. Degraded conditions of life and associated risks

Slum and pavement dwellers are greatly at risk from pollution. Due to the conditions under which they live and work, they are brought more often into contact with toxins in the air, water and soil. Through the open sewers, unpaved lanes, impermanent house structures and the use of common toilets and water taps, they are thereby more exposed to the hazards that have an effect on health and well-being. The children of the poor, due to their age, vulnerability and nutritional status are even more at risk. A survey of children under five in a slum, found 61 per cent of boys and 72 per cent of girls to be malnourished on the basis of the weight-for-age index. Another recent study, by the SNDT university, had found 63 per cent of the children to be malnourished (Swaminathan, 1995).

The people in the slums and on the pavements live in constant fear of eviction. Eviction, even to a better place (which is almost never the case) threatens their jobs: "There is no meaning in promising to give us housing if our jobs are lost". Kapadia (1996) records that the central concern of people from destroyed slums was that the right to 'housing' must be understood to include the right to continued employment and to continued schooling for the children of the people who are moved. She tells of the case of a woman living in a threatened slum whose child was studying in Class X (a remarkably high level of educational achievement): "The woman had shrewdly pointed out the irony: the same government that talked about the great importance of bringing education to the poor, was busily destroying the life chances of those children who had made it to the tenth grade" (Kapadia, 1996).

Farida Lambay, Vice-Principal of Mumbai's leading school of social work and one of the founder members of 'Pratham' (an NGO which is assisting the educational efforts of the Municipal Corporation) affirms, "Everything else, even education and jobs, is secondary, because if you live in fear of eviction every day, you are utterly vulnerable. First people must have secure housing, thereafter they too will be able to demand their other rights" (Kapadia, 1997).

Water

Gaining access to clean drinking water occupies much of the time and energy of women and children living in non-standard housing. According to a study based on census information of the civic and other amenities available in notified slums of Class I and II towns, it was reported that in Bombay in 1981, there were on average as many as 203 users for every tap in slum settlements, and this figure could be as high as 8,600 users for a tap in some areas. According to a survey for a report card on public services for the urban poor in Mumbai (Public Affairs Centre, 1997) the average distance to a tap is about 70 metres, and 1.5 hours on average were spent in queuing at the tap. Consequently, 82 per cent of the respondents reported receiving an insufficient quantity of water and 65 per cent of them reported frequent failure of even this water supply. This tenuous and unreliable public tap is, however, the main source of drinking water for 77 per cent of the population (Swaminathan, 1995).

Naturally, there are shortages and queues. As always, it is the women and children who are affected the most, as much of the activity of the women and children revolves around acquiring as much water as they can for their daily needs. Swaminathan (1995) reports that most women have to get up early, at 3.00 a.m. or 4.00 a.m. and spend the next few hours collecting water for the daily needs of their family. Water being carried home in large and small vessels by women and children is a common sight in most slum areas in Mumbai. The low levels of hygiene and high levels of environmental pollution can quickly lead to contamination during transportation, collection and storage, even if the original source is not contaminated.

Working mothers

The loss of the extended family network in urban life is one of the most significant departures from rural living. This has a far-reaching impact on women and children in the form of diminishing child-care options and household help. According to Lambay (1998), 40 per cent of the mothers in slums work and earn less than 500 rupees per month. In such conditions it is not uncommon to find the children, usually the eldest child, sharing the burden of childcare and housework.

Box I.2 illustrates an instance reported by the Doorstep School (1998), where girls are expected to look after domestic chores and the young children. The Doorstep School finds that "Those girls who do not work are usually kept at home to look after the younger siblings. They are expected to handle all the domestic chores as the mother returns home very tired, and maybe take over the care of the younger children". The report also finds that, "It is not infrequent that one sees a mother resting in the home while a daughter of school-going age handles the household responsibility. The mother probably did the same at that age and has been further strained through frequent child bearing and possible inadequate nutrition".

Box I.2. A typical day in the life of a migrant girl, Mumbai

Munni, belongs to a family who were originally a nomadic tribe. Her day starts at 6 a.m. By 7.30 a.m. she, along with other members of her family, are at the docks waiting for the fishing boats to come in with fish to be cleaned. Depending on the day's catch, she could be at work till 9 p.m. On reaching home the family start their chores – fetching water, washing clothes and preparing the evening meals. Water is brought from someone who has stored it and will now sell it to them – this activity takes one, to one and a half-hours. Washing clothes is done by carrying the water and dirty clothes to a designated area in the colony. Almost two hours a day are spent in this activity. Usually the work is shared but sometimes the whole responsibility falls on the shoulders of one girl, like Munni, who may be anywhere between the age of 10-15 years (The Doorstep School, 1998).

Mumbai – Conditions of life and implications for education of the poor

The conditions of life of the poor in Mumbai, therefore, are hard and none too supportive of education.

The flimsy shelters and conditions of overcrowding in the slums and in pavement dwellings do not provide an environment conducive to study

Chitnis and Suvannathat (1984) speaking of the implications of slum housing for education, say that, "Children living on pavements and in hutments are exposed to harsh heat in summer and to continuous wind and rain during monsoons. For almost four months a year they are often in damp or wet clothing, for weeks on end. Even those who have shelter live nevertheless in places where toilet facilities are negligible, where drains are clogged, flooded and overflowing, where there is no drainage or sanitation at all and certainly without a corner to sit and study or a light to read by at night".

A study by Bhide (1973) had also shown that among drop-outs, 19 out of 25 had no electricity at home and 10 had no place to study. She compared this group with 25 good performers, out of whom more than half (14) of them had reported that they had no problems finding positive conditions for study. Desai (1989) too agrees that in the slums, "The overcrowding, noise and the steady appearance of cheap transistors, TVs and, now, videos, make it impossible to study. Men quarrelling under the influence of alcohol, women quarrelling at the common taps, as also quarrels between husband and wife or between neighbours, make studying an impossible task".

Unsettled existence affects both the values attached to education as well as the ability to continue schooling

Leaving school for change of residence was found by Chitnis and Suvanthat (1984) to be a common occurrence. They report that children are pulled out of school when their parents move from one construction site to another, or from one slum to another when their illegal shanties are demolished, or when they are evicted from their slums in 'slum clearance' drives. Children also move back and forth from village to city if their families fail to find work. Though leaving school for change of residence need not necessarily imply drop-out, it does however become a greater possibility.

Kapadia (1997) quotes two interviews with NGOs in Mumbai which are of the view that, in the context of Mumbai, it is not just education but every other right of the child which is threatened by eviction and that a child is made vulnerable due to an unsettled existence. According to YUVA (Youth for Voluntary Action), an NGO based in Mumbai, "All the rights of a child are endangered by the threat of eviction: unless the child and family have minimal shelter, the children enjoy virtually no rights". Nirman, another NGO, referred to the positive impact of security of parents on the life of the child: "The vulnerability of parents has a strong impact on the vulnerability of children. Where the rights of working parents have been secured and wages have gone up, parents have been much more interested in educating their children and taking better care of them. Children (of migrant workers) are discriminated against in schools, which often refuse to admit them, claiming that they will not attend regularly".

Irregular school attendance and drop-out are unfortunately very much a reality for schools attended by the children of the poor. Paranjpe's study of wastage and stagnation (1992) among children attending municipal schools found that for the group of children joining Class I in the year 1987, 25 per cent of the children dropped out of school somewhere during the first four years, while another 2 per cent left with a school-leaving certificate in the first year, another 8 per cent in the second year and 15 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively, left in the subsequent years.

Unhealthy living conditions and the drudgery of everyday life takes their toll on the energies available for investing in the future

According to a health survey conducted under the gradation programme supported by the CASP-PIA initiative, it was found that low achievers in municipal schools suffered from worms, respiratory infections, rickets, anaemia, TB and deficiency of 'A' and 'D' vitamins (Kamat, 1999). It was also found that poor health restrains students from attending school regularly and, due to frequent absence, they lag behind in achievement and are not able to keep up with their classmates. As a result, they lose interest in learning. The majority of these children were also found to be undernourished.

Desai (1989), based on her research and long experience of education of children in Mumbai slums, alludes to the circumstances of the parents' lives as a factor determining the child's education. "Parents whose present life circumstances require tremendous energy and effort can invest very little in the future. The present predominates over the future and expectations of future rewards. Education may be a value but it is of a lower order of priorities because of life's competing demands". Her statement is supported by evidence from studies conducted by the Municipal Corporation, which have found that 50 per cent of children drop out due to household responsibilities.

With morbidity rates higher in the residential areas of the poor, and women under great pressure in work, with little extended-family support, it is not surprising to find that children are kept at home to do the housework if someone such as the mother is ill and that whoever is older is affected, irrespective of sex.

Many children, as in the case of the nomadic tribe described by the Doorstep School, do not even enrol and when it comes to attending non-formal education classes, the Doorstep School found that "Many of the girls come to class only when 'Didi' (Co-ordinator or teacher) comes to call them. They need a reminder, as they are totally involved with their domestic work". Boys from this community apparently are not only sent to school, but the boys almost never share the domestic responsibilities placed upon the girls in the community.

When the mother has to work, then again it has repercussions for the education of the child. Lambay (1998) reports that the task of walking their children to and from school is usually assigned to women. In a situation where 40 per cent of the mothers work, this responsibility may cost the family a job. Nearly 60 per cent of parents residing in slums, she adds, find it difficult to walk their children to and from school. Even if the child is sent to school, regularity of attendance is affected as "Working parents cannot assure that their children will go regularly to school. These children may oversleep, or those in the afternoon shifts are so engrossed in play that they miss the time or are tempted to stay away" (Desai, 1989). When the children are attending different shifts, sometimes a child may need to drop out to take care of the younger child, who may be attending a different shift. "We find that older siblings attending morning shift have to leave school because they have younger children at home who are out-of-school at that time" (Desai, 1989).

Sometimes the family circumstances require some children to earn. However, Desai (1989) is of the view that economic reasons alone do not pull a child out-of-school. "Generally parents do not take the child out-of-school unless he is not doing well".

In a city of the size of Mumbai, a large number of children are on their own and living on the streets. These 'street children', as they are called, are naturally out-of-school. Many have dropped out and some have never enrolled. Street children, tribals, children of construction workers, and children of pavement dwellers are considered as 'hard core groups' – the education of whom remains a major problem. The circumstances of the lives of these groups in the city make it difficult to attend school. To this category, Lambay would now add homeless street girls, minors in the sex trade, girl children of sex workers, children of institutionalized (jailed) mothers, children living on the rail tracks, domestic workers and victims of traumas such as riots (Kapadia, 1997).

Traditional attitudes to education, perceived as the exclusive preserve of some, affect commitment to securing education for all

It would not be possible to truly understand the context of education of the poor in Mumbai, without consideration of some of the prevailing values and attitudes that impinge on their prospects of receiving an education. Though these values were not and are not restricted to Mumbai, the city is not spared from being influenced by them.

Education in the Indian subcontinent was never considered to be something that all people had a right to. It was the exclusive preserve of some castes of people. A number of forces have 'converged' to create this exclusiveness. The first is the notion that knowledge is sacred and therefore not to be imparted to the ritually impure lower castes. Secondly, India had very limited use for formal schooling, with the economy remaining largely agrarian. Thirdly, neither the native princes nor the British rulers who succeeded them were committed to schooling the masses. But, finally and most significantly, feels Chitnis, is the fact that "Until very recently the Indian consciousness and conscience had not really been invaded by sentiments of equality and by the awareness that universalization of schooling is the cornerstone of economic advance and social development".

In fact, even today, attitudes and values such as described by Chitnis above hamper the education of the masses. India is still struggling to pass an amendment to its Constitution to make primary education a fundamental right for all children. When the Indian Constitution was being framed in 1947, free and compulsory education had been proposed to be included as a fundamental right. However, its inclusion was struck out (Juneja, 1998) and the same clause was instead inserted as Article 45 in the Section known as

Directive Principles of State Policy, of the Indian Constitution. The 'Directive Principles of State Policy' do not make it mandatory for states to act in accordance with its clauses.

In conclusion, one observes that the fact of being poor in Mumbai affects the chances of the children of the poor receiving even a basic level of education. Some of the factors that work against this being, as developed in this chapter

- The parents of these children are likely to be little, if at all, educated and are therefore, unlikely to be of assistance to the child in socializing him/her to the school environment. The child may consequently receive little or no support in maintaining regularity of attendance and in keeping pace with the expected standards of education.
- The conditions in which the children of the poor live are liable to put them under greater risk of ill health, overwork or both.
- Even the basic conditions required for study, such as a quiet place, and a light to read by, are unlikely to be available to them.
- More often than not, the competing demands of school and home are likely to exert so much strain on the child, as to compel him/her, to drop out.

Thus, it may be seen that the cards are already stacked against the education of the children of the poor. As will be seen in the next chapter, few of the children of the poor complete even the lower primary stage. To change this is the challenge.

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II. MUMBAI: THE EDUCATION SCENE

Literacy rate

The literacy rate for Mumbai is presented in *Table II.1* below, as compared to the State of Maharashtra and for the whole of India.

Table II.1. Literacy rate: Mumbai, Maharashtra and All India (1991 census) *(percentages)*

Area	Male	Female	Total
Mumbai	87.9	75.8	82.5
Maharashtra (Urban)	86.6	70.9	79.3
All India (Urban)	83.3	65.7	75.0

Source: Government of Maharashtra, 1999.

As may be seen from *Table II.1*, Mumbai enjoys a higher literacy rate than either the State of Maharashtra or India as a whole. In the decade since these data were collected, the literacy rate has doubtless increased in the city. An interim sample survey on literacy (GOI, 2000, NSSO, 53rd round, 1997) indicates a healthy increase of 9.1 percentage points in literacy for the state. The next census, in the year 2001, will no doubt enable to obtain a better picture of the status of literacy, since in India, as in most other countries, the data on literacy are provided mainly through the population census.

The number of children in school and out-of-school

According to the Directorate of Education of the State of Maharashtra (2000) in 1998-1999, the enrolment ratios corresponding to the relevant age groups for Classes I-V, VI-VIII and I-VIII, were 94 per cent, 97.5 per cent and 95.3 per cent respectively.

The same document also provides figures for the projected population of children in the age groups 6-11 years, 11-14 years, and 6-14 years in 1998, as well as the enrolment by class in 1998-1999. These figures were used in order to prepare *Table II.2* below, which shows the number of children enrolled in Classes I-V, VI-VIII and I-VIII respectively. This table also presents the gross and net enrolment ratios, as well as the estimated number of out-of-school children in these age groups.

Number of children in school

As may be seen in *Table II.2*, 1.73 million children were enrolled in formal recognized schools in Mumbai in the academic year 1998-99. Of these, about 1.1 million were in Classes I-V, while the remaining 0.6 million were in Classes VI-VIII.

Table II.2. Mumbai: school enrolment in age groups 6-11, 11-14 and 6-14 years (1998-1999)

Age group (corresponding classes)	Projected population (1998)	Enrolment in 1998-1999 in corresponding classes	Gross enrolment ratio (GER)	Estimated % of over and under-age children	Net enrolment ratio (NER)	Estimated out-of-school children
6-11 years (Class I-V)	1,177,000	1,107,195	94.07%	26.06%	818,660 (69.55%)	358,340 (30.45%)
11-14 years (Class VI-VIII)	641,000	624,518	97.42%	29.36%	441,159 (71.40%)	183,359 (28.60%)
6-14 years (Class I-VIII)	1,818,000	1,731,713	95.25%		1,259,819 (70.20%)	541,699 (29.80%)

Source: Computed by the author based on NCERT (1995) and GOM (2000) data.

Notes: Enrolment and Projected population obtained from Government of Maharashtra (2000). Enrolment has been adjusted for the age groups 6-11 (26.06%), and, for 11-14 years (29.36%), based on NCERT (1995) data. Totals may not tally due to rounding of figures.

In Mumbai, primary classes are actually from Classes I-IV; and upper primary is from Class V-VII, while the officially declared age of entry to Class I is at five years of age. Therefore to be correct, one should be discussing children at the ages of 5+, 6+, 7+ and 8+ for primary Classes I-IV; and children of ages 9+, 10+ and 11+ for upper primary Classes V-VII. But, since the data, even in the official document of the Directorate of Education of the state were in the format seen in *Table II.2*, the same format has been maintained in this chapter for further analysis of data.

As may be seen in *Table II.2* above, the enrolled children represent 94 per cent; 97 per cent; and 95 per cent of the projected population of children in the age group 6-11 years, 11-14 years and 6-14 years respectively. In other words, these percentages represent the gross enrolment figures for the city.

Out-of-school children

To arrive at the number of out-of-school children in the different age groups, the gross enrolment needs to be adjusted for over-age and under-age children at the different levels of education, namely, primary, upper primary and elementary. According to Mehta (1999) "The balance of age-specific population and adjusted enrolment is termed as out-of-school children".

The enrolment figures in column three of *Table II.2* include both over-age and under-age children. These were accordingly adjusted using the percentages of over-age and under-age children in schools in urban areas of Maharashtra State (NCERT, 1995). The age group 6-11 years was adjusted at the rate of 26.06 per cent, and the age group 11-14 years was adjusted at the rate of 29.36 per cent. By this method, it was found that 30.45 per cent of the projected population in the age group 6-11 years, and 28.6 per cent of the projected population in the age group 11-14 years were out of school in 1998-1999.

In absolute terms this means that 358,340 children were out-of-school in the age group 6-11 years, and 183,359 children in the age group 11-14 years. Altogether, an estimated 541,699 children, or about 30 per cent of the population in the age group 6-14 years, were not enrolled in the formal school system in Mumbai in 1998-1999.

These figures no doubt appear shocking, but only until one compares them to the figures of out-of-school children at the national level. At the 'All India' level, one can find that 30.65 per cent of the population were out-of-school in the age group 6-11 years, while 52.01 per cent of the population were out-of-school in the age group 11-14 years, and altogether 37.80 per cent of the children in the age group 6-14 years for the whole of India were out-of-school in 1993-1994 (Mehta, 1999).

These figures stand in stark contrast to the numbers of out-of-school children estimated by the NGO Pratham in 1999. Pratham estimates that in 1999 the number out of school in the age group 6-10 years (Standard I to IV – lower primary) was "somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000 children". This estimate includes children who were never enrolled in school as well as those who had dropped out. Pratham states: "We have arrived at this data through a combination of door-to-door surveys and feedback from our 5,000 strong activists network in slum communities. There is no reliable data on the subject. There are high-risk groups such as pavement dwellers' children, street children, rag pickers, beggar children, working children, children of construction labourers, etc. Figures about these groups are especially hard to get because of the migratory nature of this population".

Why this difference in estimates? Pratham concedes that its estimates of out-of-school children could differ from the actual number, due to the migratory groups in the population. On the other hand, the estimates calculated from data in *Table II.2* could differ on account of the variation between current ground realities and the basic assumptions of the formulae used in arriving at these figures. In fact, the projected population in *Table II.2* is based on the assumption of population growth as in the previous decade. It is perhaps possible that the growth rate in this decade is actually lower than the figure being taken today as the basis for population projections (in which case, the number of children in school would represent a larger proportion of the population, and the number of out-of-school children would be less).

The actual population growth rate for the decade 1991-2001 can only be known after the 2001 Census. It is possible that the birth rate may have declined over this period and/or the growth of population may have been slower. A slower growth rate is not altogether impossible in the light of the closure of many textile mills and the consequent dispersal of the population in the past decade, as seen in the previous chapter (at the same time the disruption that such economic upheavals would have caused in the lives of the poor, could also have resulted in a larger number of children out-of-school).

Secondly, the adjustment of over-age and under-age children in the population was done on the basis of over-age and under-age children as found in schools in urban areas in Maharashtra State in 1993-1994 (NCERT, 1995). This situation, too, could have undergone a change since then, and/or the same situation may not be valid for Mumbai.

On the other hand, the enrolment figures have also been assumed to be valid. But economists Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen (1995) do not place too much reliance on 'official data' released by Departments of Education, having found that "Official school enrolment figures are known to be grossly inflated, partly due to the incentives that government employees at different levels have to report exaggerated figures".

While it may not be possible until the next census to know for sure how many children remain out-of-school in Mumbai, some other trends on the education scene also indicate changes regarding the school population in Mumbai.

Decline in primary school enrolment

A decline has been observed of late in gross enrolment ratios, and enrolments at the primary stage and in Class I. As may be seen in *Table II.3*, the enrolment ratios for the years 1994 to 1999 reveal a downward trend in the percentage of enrolment in primary classes to the corresponding age-group population. Except for an inexplicable spurt in 1996-1997, the enrolment ratios may be seen to be reducing every year. *Table II.4* also shows a decline in the actual numbers of children enrolling in Class I.

Table II.3. Mumbai: enrolment ratios in Classes I-VIII to the corresponding age-group population (1994-1999)

	Enrolment ratios in Classes I-VIII to the corresponding age-group population		
Years	(I-V)	(VI-VIII)	(I-VIII)
1994-1995	107.1	81.1	97.1
1995-1996	102.2	83.7	95.1
1996-1997	105.2	101.1	103.7
1997-1998	98.7	98.9	98.8
1998-1999	94.0	97.5	95.3

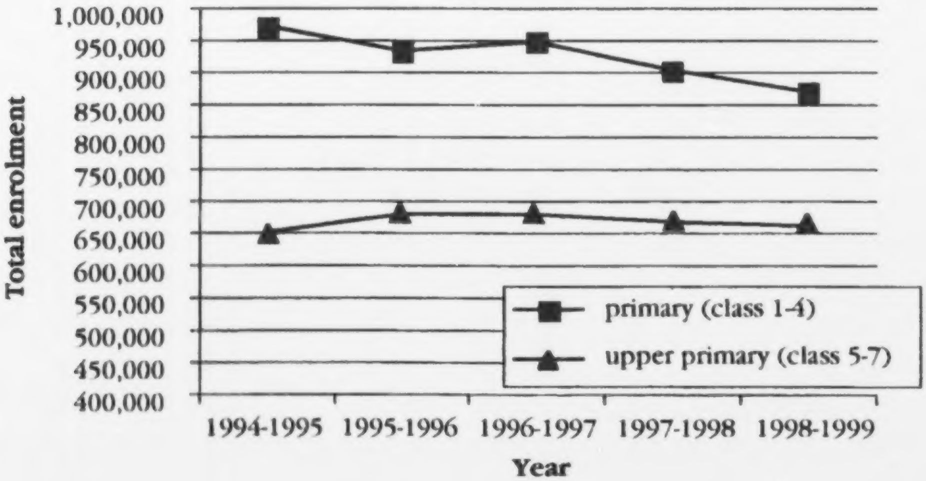
Source: Directorate of Education, Maharashtra, September 1996, August 1997, September 1998, July 1999 and July 2000.

Table II.4. Mumbai: total enrolment in Class I, Classes I-IV and Classes V-VII (1994-1999)

Year	Enrolment in Class I	Enrolment in Classes I-IV	Enrolment in Classes V-VII
1994-1995	255,107	969,803	649,691
1995-1996	247,135	930,984	677,476
1996-1997	251,250	945,736	677,817
1997-1998	235,230	901,181	666,393
1998-1999	226,941	868,659	659,143

Source: Directorate of Education, Maharashtra, September 1996, August 1997, September 1998, July 1999 and July 2000.

Figure II.1. Total enrolments at upper primary stage and declining enrolment at the lower primary stage (1994-1999)



Source: Directorate of Education, Maharashtra, September 1996, August, 1997, September 1998, July 1999 and July 2000.

A look at total enrolment at the primary and upper-primary stages in recent years also reveals a decline in each year in the total number of children enrolled in the lower-primary classes (*Table II.4*). The children who are already at the upper-primary stage, however, show no such decline in numbers (*Table II.4* and *Figure II.1*).

This situation of declining GERs and enrolments could suggest one of the following possibilities:

- enrolments are indeed declining as compared to the population of children in that age group, possibly due to decline in the birth rate;
- population projections based on growth in the previous decade may have caused the populations to be overestimated and consequently the GERs show a decline; or
- a lesser number of over-age and under-age children are enrolling in these classes.

Taking into account the situation on the ground, it could also be suggested that apart from declining population, diversion of children to pre-primary could be showing up in these figures. Concerted efforts have been made in the recent past in Mumbai to open pre-school centres in municipal schools and even in slums. Perhaps more children are going to these pre- school centres instead of directly enrolling in municipal schools.

Secondly, in the light of recent events in Mumbai, such as the closure of textile mills, less job opportunities, dispersal of the population to the suburbs, and the disruption in the lives of the people, it would not be surprising if a lesser number of children in the lower age groups are enrolling in schools. But if this were so, then children in upper primary would also be withdrawn. The stability in numbers at the upper-primary stage shows, however, that those who are already at the upper-primary stage are not being withdrawn. In which case, perhaps one may conclude that while the rate of new migrants coming in search of jobs may have declined, those who are already settled enough for their children to have reached the upper- primary stage, may be continuing on. As will be seen further on in this chapter, there has been a shifting of the population within Mumbai itself. It is possible though that a larger number of children in the younger age groups could be remaining out-of-school due to this disruption.

The various types of school in Mumbai – their spread and clientele

In the city of Mumbai, primary education is provided by a variety of agencies. The Municipal Corporation of the city, of course, runs the largest number of schools. But there are, at the same time, a large number of schools run under private management. Many of these schools are aided with funds by the Municipal Corporation and, as such, are under an obligation to abide by the norms of the Municipal Corporation on matters such as curricula, examinations, free primary education, etc.

Private unaided schools are both owned and run by private management. These may be religious bodies, charitable trusts, private educational foundations, industrial houses and companies. Some schools in the city are also run by the central government for the benefit of its employees, especially those who are transferred on duty from state to state. *Table II.5* below provides a picture of the number of schools running under these different types of management and the enrolment in each type of school.

Table II.5. Mumbai: management of primary schools and their enrolment (1997-1998)

	Central government	Municipal	Private aided	Private unaided	Total primary schools
Schools	9 (0.41)*	1,254 (57.44)	344 (15.76)	576 (26.39)	2,183 (100)
Enrolment	7,144 (0.63)	675,169 (59.16)	183,198 (16.05)	275,696 (24.16)	1,141,207 (100)

Source: Government of Maharasthra, September 1999.
* Figures in brackets are percentages.

As may be seen from the above *Table II.5*, the largest number of schools and also the bulk of enrolment belong to the Municipal Corporation. Private aided and private unaided schools together account for about 42 per cent of the number of schools in the city. But since they command only about 40 per cent of the total enrolment, they are less crowded than municipal schools.

The privately managed schools differ in many important ways from those run by the Municipal Corporation. According to Chitnis (1987), the high fees charged by private schools largely offer 'exclusiveness'. But the high fees also cover the cost of superior physical amenities and surroundings, better teaching aids, laboratories, libraries and other academic facilities, a smaller teacher/pupil ratio, more varied choices in the courses offered (in the case of unaided schools), more diversified and better organized extra-curricular activities, exposure and experience. Chitnis adds: "Parents who can afford to do so send their children to private schools which offer these 'extras'. Since these parents happen, inevitably, to be educated and occupationally well placed, the schools gain in strength since they acquire a body of students who come from backgrounds that are highly favourable to schooling".

Box II.1. Municipal, private aided and private schools: who attends which type of school?

"Everyone knows that municipal schools are used only by those who cannot (or will not) pay for privately managed schools". Yet there is hardly any research data to document and substantiate what everyone knows. Could it be that research on such 'home truths' could get too uncomfortable?

It took an outsider, a Professor of Anthropology and Sociology from the University of British Columbia, to examine this 'class' phenomenon and its relationship to the school system in Mumbai. In this rare study, which is now more than two decades old, and which leaned heavily on the Marxist standpoint, J.K. Lindsey (1978) examined the school in Mumbai "as placed within, and related to, the social structure of the society and given an historical perspective".

He found that municipal schools were used largely by 'wage labourers' and by another category comprising "those stating that their father was deceased, that he is unemployed, or that they come from a broken home". He termed this lowest social category as 'lumpen proletariat', with the explanation that this was "a term commonly used in India both in the literature and in the street, since no equivalent exists in the Indian languages". Using this Marxist perspective and terminology, Lindsey's research study produced tables such as the one below to demonstrate that "social structures and social relations emanate from the vital activities of the people in society, in the production and distribution process, but manifest themselves throughout society including the school system" (Lindsey, 1978).

Lindsey's table below shows that children who belong to the uppermost social classes attend unaided schools; while aided schools may be seen to be taking their clientele largely from the middle categories.

Is this situation as true today as it was in 1978? There is no research to say whether it is or it is not.

Social class of school sponsor	Municipal school	Recognized school	
		Aided	Unaided
'Lumpen proletariat'	0.622	-0.220	-0.402
Wage labourers	0.446	-0.140	-0.306
Artisans	-0.086	0.446	-0.357
Shopkeepers	-0.166	0.208	-0.042
White-collar workers	-0.536	0.149	0.387
Ideological occupations	-0.278	-0.443	0.720

Note: (chi square [10] = 536.01, N = 4,433).
Source: Lindsey , 1978.

Mediums of instruction in schools in Mumbai

Few cities in the world offer education in as many mediums of instruction as Mumbai does. Municipal schools in Mumbai offer primary education in eight different mediums of instruction. This is because the population of Mumbai is largely made up of persons who had migrated to the city from neighbouring states and other parts of India. The Census (1991) lists 26 languages that have been identified by the citizens of Mumbai as their mother tongue. However, only five languages among these are spoken by more than 2.5 per cent, of the population. These are Marathi (41.7 per cent), Hindi (15.7 per cent), Gujarati (13.9 per cent), Urdu (12.8 per cent) and Tamil (2.8 per cent).

Municipal primary schools offer all these five languages as mediums of instruction and, in addition, offer Telugu (mother tongue of 1.9 per cent), Kannada (mother tongue of 2.2 per cent) and English (mother tongue of 0.7 per cent).

Table II.6 below shows the number of schools in Mumbai, their management category, and the medium in which they offer instruction.

Table II.6. Mumbai: medium of instruction and number of schools (1999)

Type of school	Marathi	Hindi	Gujarati	Urdu	Tamil	Telugu	Kannada	English	Total
Municipal	506	218	136	203	46	47	48	39	1,243
Aided	135	34	61	23	1	0	3	85	342
Unaided	96	24	28	16	0	0	1	408	573
Total	737	276	225	242	47	47	52	532	2,158

Source: Data provided by BMED, 1999.

As shown in *Table II.6* the largest numbers of schools offer Marathi as the medium of instruction – which is not surprising, as Marathi constitutes the language of most of the people living in Mumbai. Most of the Marathi-medium schools are municipal schools (506 schools), followed, in descending order, by private aided and unaided schools. Other languages being offered by a large number of municipal schools are Hindi (218 schools), Gujarati (136 schools) and Urdu (203 schools). The second largest category is that of the unaided private English medium schools (408). Those who wish to attract a fee-paying clientele, tend to set up schools that teach in English.

The demand for each language by the clientele of the different types of school is reflected in their enrolment. *Table II.7* below shows that more than 67 per cent of the children are enrolled in the Marathi and Hindi medium in municipal schools. A fifth of the enrolment is in Urdu schools, while the percentage of enrolment in the other languages is in single-digit figures only.

Table II.7. Mumbai: medium of instruction and percentage enrolment (1999)

Type of management	Marathi	Hindi	Gujarati	Urdu	Tamil	Telugu	Kannada	English	Total
MCGM	43.33	24.23	4.48	19.90	2.89	1.49	1.42	2.25	100
Aided	43.46	10.22	14.08	5.83	0.34	0.00	0.15	25.92	100
Unaided	16.59	2.78	2.44	2.23	0.00	0.00	0.03	75.93	100
Total	36.30	16.21	5.57	12.87	1.70	0.85	0.84	25.66	100

Source: Ibid.

It is interesting to note, that while Marathi is equally popular in aided schools, it has comparatively less enrolment in unaided (fee charging) schools. English, on the other hand, is the medium of instruction of 2.25 per cent of municipal school students, the preferred medium of instruction of a quarter of the aided-school clientele, but of an astonishing three-quarters of the clientele of unaided schools. Clearly, English is the medium of choice for those who can afford to pay for private schooling.

Network of schools in Mumbai

Table II.8 shows the number of schools in each of the 23 wards in the city. The table will be easier to understand if one can imagine the City of Mumbai hanging downward like a bunch of grapes (see *Map II.1*). The grapes at the narrow southern tip would represent the city's earliest municipal Wards, A, B, C, and D, etc. When the city grew, it added more wards in the north and also became wider at the top. At the broader northern end, therefore, one finds the newest wards R, S, T, etc.

Table II.8. Number and type of primary schools in each municipal ward in Mumbai (1999)

		School management						
		BMED		Aided		Unaided		
School number	Ward	Number of schools	Schools %	Number of schools	Schools %	Number of schools	Schools %	Total
1	A	18	40.00	6	13.33	19	46.67	45
2	B	16	42.11	14	36.84	8	21.05	38
3	C	18	46.15	7	17.95	14	35.90	39
4	D	32	33.33	21	21.88	43	44.79	96
5	E	63	60.00	15	14.29	27	25.71	105
6	F (S)	62	70.45	16	18.18	10	11.36	88
7	F (N)	64	56.14	20	17.54	30	26.32	114
8	G (S)	77	83.70	6	6.52	9	9.78	92
9	G (N)	59	65.56	9	10.00	22	24.44	90
10	H (E)	61	76.25	8	10.00	11	13.75	80
11	H (W)	40	42.55	13	13.83	41	43.62	94
12	K (E)	85	59.03	16	11.11	43	29.86	144
13	K (W)	58	52.73	9	9.09	43	38.18	110
14	L	82	61.19	27	20.15	25	18.66	135
15	M (E)	64	56.14	19	16.67	31	27.19	114
16	M (W)	48	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	48
17	N	85	70.83	15	12.50	20	16.67	120
18	P (E)	34	52.31	15	23.08	16	24.62	65
19	P (N)	70	49.65	21	14.89	50	35.46	141
20	R (S)	26	43.33	12	20.00	22	36.67	60
21	R (N)	64	49.61	29	22.48	36	27.91	129
22	S	68	49.64	36	26.28	33	24.09	137
23	T	49	60.49	11	13.58	21	25.93	81
	Total	1,243	57.44	346	15.99	575	26.57	2,164

Source: Data provided by Research Unit, BMED, 1999. They do not include information on the nine schools run by the central government.

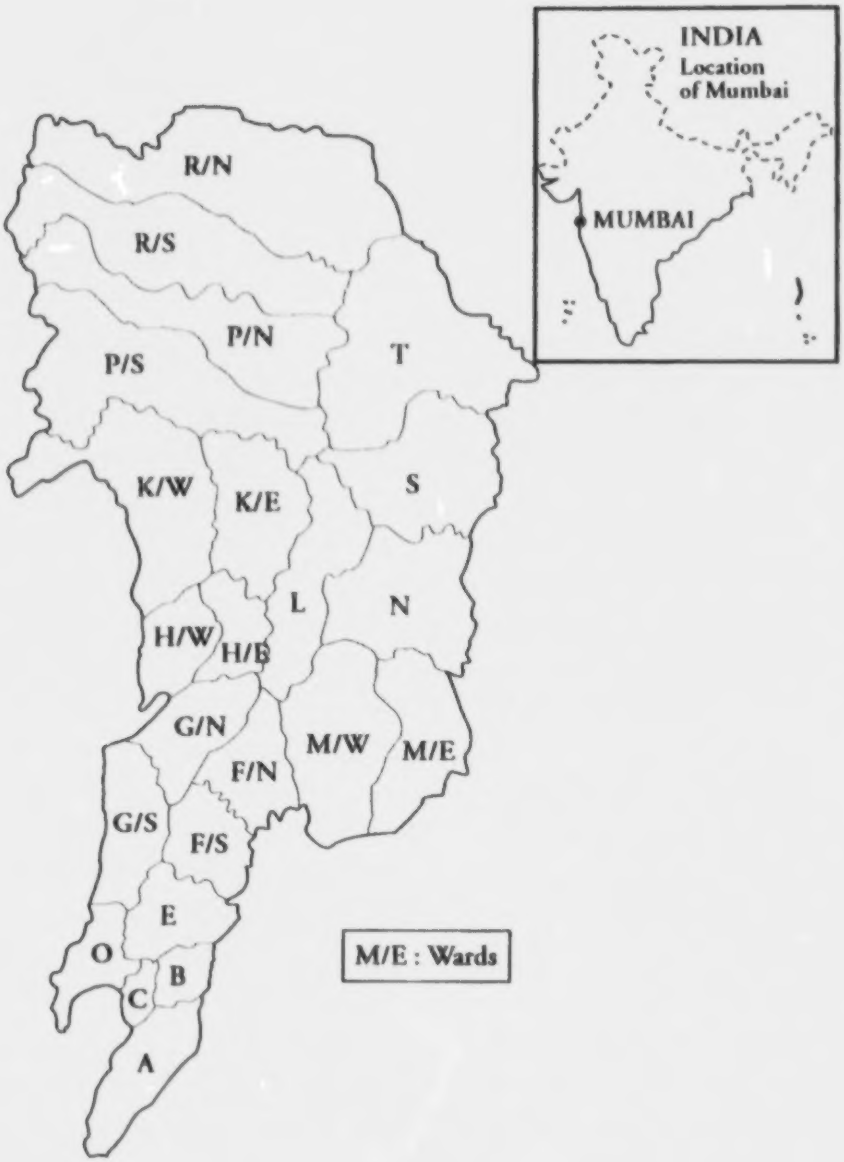
As may be seen from *Table II.8*, there are some wards, M (West) for example, which are served largely or solely by municipal schools. Private aided and unaided schools, perhaps, will not find their fee-paying clientele living in these parts.

The schools for the poor – their accessibility, attraction, retention and efficiency

The reach and accessibility of schools for the poor

Just as the poor in Mumbai are hard pressed to find space for housing, so too is the BMED under pressure to put up schools for its children. As the population has been shifting northwards, so have the schools. But whereas a migrant can squat on any patch of land or pavement, the school, which must be made available within a kilometre or so to children, cannot just 'squat' on any vacant land. Schools must be situated on a legally owned or rented space. Moreover, unlike schools in Delhi, which can spring up in tents overnight, the BMED always houses its schools in 'pukka' (permanent) buildings. When it is not able to build its own schools for some reason or another, it rents an available building.

Map II.1. Mumbai City - Wards


INDIA
Location of Mumbai
MUMBAI
R/N
R/S
P/N
P/S
T
K/W
K/E
S
L
N
H/W
H/E
G/N
M/W
M/E
F/N
G/S
F/S
E
O
B
C
A
M/E : Wards

With the shifting of the population of Mumbai towards the northern suburbs, the BMED has had to close schools in some wards and open more schools in others. *Table II.9* below shows how the opening and closing of schools has changed the Mumbai school map since 1981 in the case of municipal primary schools.

Table II.9. The changing number of municipal schools in each ward as the population shifted northwards (1981-1999)

SchooL number	Municipal ward	Number of municipal schools			
		1981	1991	1995	1999
1	A	24	21	18	18
2	B	33	19	17	16
3	C	47	33	19	18
4	D	61	41	34	32
5	E	86	81	66	63
6	F (South)	86		71	62
7	F (North)	89		65	64
8	G (South)	93		81	77
9	G (North)	61		61	59
10	H (East)	61		61	61
11	H (West)	48		41	40
12	K (East)	71	85	72	85
13	K (West)	53		56	58
14	L	80	55	86	82
15	M (East)	85	57	60	64
16	M (West)		40	43	48
17	N	78	85	84	85
18	P (South)	52		34	34
19	P (North)	44		70	70
20	R (South)	74		22	26
21	R (North)			63	64
22	S	59	22	74	68
23	T	29	49	49	49
	Total			1,253	1,243

Source: For 1999: BMED; for 1995: BMED; for 1991: Lambay and Chavan (19 selected wards only); and for 1981: Sharma, 1989.

Table II.9 shows the number of municipal primary schools in various municipal wards at different points of time since 1981. One can see that in Wards A to H, the municipal schools have been reducing in number, while the opposite is the case for wards like M (East and West), K (West) N, P, R, etc. in the North of Mumbai. According to Lambay and Chavan (1993), the number of municipal school premises decreased by 33 between 1990 and 1991. One may also see from *Table II.9* that the reduction in numbers of schools is continuing. There was an overall decrease of 10 schools between 1995 and 1999.

A municipal school building in the city is, typically, a four- or five-storied building in the shape of an 'L' or 'U' with a flagstone or concrete courtyard in the bounded space. There are between 12 to 15 classrooms (of about 400 square feet each) on each floor. Usually each building houses about 50 to 80 classrooms. It would be common to find six to eight primary schools (of seven classrooms or so each) accommodated in a single such building. Most of these schools offer education in different languages. About half of the schools would be run in one shift and half in the second shift. With eight media of instruction, it is difficult, and not always possible, to provide schools in the desired medium of instruction within walking distance. Besides, with the shifting of the population to the northern suburbs, the BMED now has to cope with the problem of unfavourable teacher/pupil ratios and crowded classrooms in the extended suburbs.

At present the 1,243 municipal primary schools are housed in 714 buildings. The Municipal Corporation owns 393 of these school buildings. It pays rent for 270 school premises. Some 24 buildings have been provided to the BMED on a rent-free basis and another 37 belong to the Ward Office Estate. Progress in this area may be seen in the fact that today, the BMED owns about a hundred more school buildings and takes on rent a hundred less buildings than it did about 20 years ago.

According to Lambay and Chavan (1993) numerical adequacy of number of schools does not necessarily imply easy accessibility – "A large number of children have to travel long distances either on foot or by bus, to reach schools. Managing variables such as available budget, space for schools, spread of linguistically varied population puts constraints on providing easily accessible schools to each language group". According to them, "there is a general problem of access for the South Indian language-medium schools, especially for upper-primary and secondary education".

This problem is further compounded in the case of slum populations who have settled on land owned, for example, by land-owning agencies such as Port Trusts, Defence, Railways, etc. which tend to operate independently of the city planning system (Sundaram, 1998). Even while allowing slums to come up on their vacant lands, these agencies, according to Sundaram (1998) "are reluctant to permit the provision of basic services to the slum dwellers".

Banerji (2000), citing examples from micro-level studies in Mumbai slums, finds that distance and accessibility can be major obstacles to the regular school attendance of small children. She found that "The municipal school that serves the children of Sathe Nagar, and Zakir Hussain Nagar is far away. It would take a child more than half an hour to walk there. Since many parents, especially in Sathe Nagar leave home early to work, there is no one to supervise the children or see if they are indeed going to school. Parents also worry about the safety of their children as there are major highways on the route to the school".

Box II.2. Two 'time and distance' problems – and their solutions

Problem I

It was earlier observed that parents refrained from sending their children to school, as there was no one to drop and fetch the very young ones.

This, according to Mumbai NGO, the 'Doorstep School', was its experience in the case of many parents whose six and seven year-old children would have attended municipal schools had they been more accessible.

The 'Doorstep School' was able to help parents such as these when a bus was donated to them. Around 60 children are now using this bus service for going and coming from their morning-shift school, and another 50 are registered for the evening-shift bus service. The Doorstep School bus service has been created only for municipal schoolchildren attending Class I (and may be extended to the children of Class II if absolutely necessary).

Even though the sum of 50 rupees per month is charged for this service (against the actual operating cost of 75 rupees per month and per head) there is an increasing demand for this kind of service.

Problem II

Some children are not able to attend normal school because it would interfere with their way of life and livelihood. They were also not able to attend non-formal school, because there was no place for them to gather and for a class to be held.

The Doorstep School got itself a bus and converted it into a mobile school.

At 7.30 a.m. it parks at the Sassoon Docks, where children of fishermen come aboard to school, inside the bus, while waiting for the catch of the day to come in. While the group of younger boys, between 7-10 years of age, is fairly regular, the older ones miss the bus-school when they go as helpers on fishing trips.

At 9.30 a.m. the bus moves on to P.D'Mello Road, where it reaches and teaches children who work as helpers and cleaners on the tourist buses parked there.

At 1.30 p.m. it is at Churchgate. Two women rag pickers in that area have taken it upon themselves to gather the children working as rag pickers for 'school'. About 25 children attend regularly, though about 50 are enrolled.

3.30 p.m.- and the bus now goes on to serve the self-styled boy 'tourist guides', shoeshine boys, and rag pickers at Apollo Bunder. Here, also, the children come aboard for daily lessons, but it is quite a job to teach this lot. They are easily distracted, as even while they are inside the bus they are constantly on the lookout for new tourists to pursue.

The last stop (so far) is at 6 p.m. at the World Trade Tower, where children from the neighbouring communities shop in for class. These children are usually drop-outs from the regular non-formal centres run by the Doorstep School. At least the novelty of classes inside a bus is serving to attract them back to class.

The shift system

In the decade following the First World War, financial stringency forced the state government to abolish a number of teaching posts and serve notice of retrenchment to a number of teachers. However, in order to save these jobs, a scheme for more economical provision of compulsory primary education was put into practice. The primary course was reduced from five years to four (and remains so to this day) and the shift system was introduced. In some years shortened sessions were also introduced in certain classes (Yearbook, 1975; Sharma, 1989).

The changing demands for school space have, over the years, played a major role in determining the Corporation's educational provision strategy. For example, policies such as the introduction of the shift system, aiding of schools run by private management and the present duration of the primary course of only four years, instead of the more common five years of primary as in other Indian States, owe their origin to the lack of available resources of money and space against the need to enrol more children into schools.

The shift system still exists with schools running in two shifts. Both shifts are co-educational (since 1950). Both shifts usually have schools of all languages and it is for the child and his/her family to decide which shift the child should attend. Schools under private management also use the shift system where necessary. However, since private schools are usually 'full' schools (comprising both secondary and primary sections) the shifts are more usually divided into the junior shift and the senior shift for junior and senior classes respectively.

Box II.3. Shift schools in Mumbai

At 12.30 p.m. the bell rings and the school witnesses the universal phenomenon of the effervescent exodus of children as they are released from their classrooms. Within minutes the school looks ready to 'shut down'. The two sweepers have done a quick round of the building, cleaning as much as they feel inclined to.

But instead of shutting down, the school is getting ready to 'restart'. Children for the next shift are already trickling in. A different set of teachers, a different headteacher. It's a completely different school, but in the same building. Only the school timings are different (in some cases, the language of instruction could be different too).

Many schools in big cities in India, including Mumbai, use the shift system to optimize the use of school space and accommodate demands for school seats and for different mediums of instruction. In this way the same school building is able to serve a larger number of children and provide them with a school within a reasonable distance of their home. Land is a scarce commodity in cities.

In Mumbai, municipal schools usually run in two shifts. Schools in the first shift run from 7.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. The second shift starts at 1 p.m. It is the parents of the child who usually decide which shift their child should attend. Using the shift system, Mumbai is able to accommodate 1,242 municipal schools in little over 700 buildings.

Many of the private schools in Mumbai have also adopted the shift system to accommodate more students. In many private schools the school is sectioned into shifts, with primary in one shift and the older secondary children in the second shift.

Enrolment and pupil/teacher ratio

Over the past few years, as discussed earlier, the population of Mumbai has shifted northwards. At the same time, however, enrolment in municipal schools has been seen to be declining. *Table II.10* below shows that there were 675,033 children enrolled in municipal schools in 1985. In 1999, enrolment had fallen to 596,006. The decrease in demand for municipal schools is certainly a cause for concern.

On the other hand, as also can be seen from *Table II.10* below, at no other point of time since 1975 was the pupil/teacher ratio as favourable as it was in 1999. While the 'pupils per teacher ratio' of 38.91 is an average for the city, it can range from as high as 49.69 in Ward R (South) to 31.34 (Ward D).

Table II.10. Mumbai: enrolment and pupil – Teacher ratios in municipal schools (1975-1999)

	1975	1985	1995	1999
Enrolment	529,337	675,033	686,289	596,006
Teachers	17,691	14,494	16,495	15,317
Pupils per teacher	29.92	46.57	41.60	38.91
Number of primary schools	1,111	1,310	1,254	1,243

Source: Data provided by the Research Unit, BMED, 1999.

Then again, the pupil/teacher ratio can vary according to the medium of instruction, and the class. Hindi and Urdu-medium schools are more crowded than the rest, and Class I and Class II are more crowded than the higher classes. Banerji (2000) suggested that this overcrowding in the lower classes might be contributing to reasons for the school to appear unattractive to the child.

The efficiency of the schools for the poor

How efficient are municipal schools in retaining children and in bringing the child to the appropriate level of educational attainment? How many children pass the primary cycle in four years, which is the ideal time period? The Education Department has adopted a policy, which states that all children shall be promoted from Class I to Class IV. This policy was adopted on the advice of child development experts, who feel that it would adversely impact the confidence of children, who may develop an inferiority complex, if they are labelled as 'failed' at such a tender age. Therefore, all children who do not drop out are able to reach Class IV. But at this Class IV stage, those who have not been able to keep pace with the expected competency levels, may not be able to pass.

A study was conducted between 1987-1991 on the problems of wastage and stagnation in the BMC schools (Research Unit, BMC and Paranjpe, 1992). This study followed one cohort through its four-year journey through primary school. The study found that of all the students admitted in Class I, only 29 per cent passed Class IV. A total of 25 per cent failed to pass Class IV. About 25 per cent of children dropped out somewhere between Class I and Class IV, and 21 per cent of the children left school with a school-leaving certificate (a school-leaving certificate enables the child to transfer to another school).

Transition and drop-out by class

The lack of data on class-wise failures and drop-outs in Mumbai greatly hampers the development of a good understanding of the phenomenon of class-wise transition and drop-out. Nevertheless, some attempts can be made to obtain insights on the basis of data provided by the research unit of the BMED (*Table II.11* below) and published data on class-wise enrolment in Mumbai city for five consecutive years (*Table II.12*).

Table II.11. Municipal schools: percentage of drop-out in each class (1998-1999)

	Classes						
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Boys	12.16	12.64	9.07	7.37	7.34	5.76	4.93
Girls	10.55	11.49	8.16	7.23	7.35	5.85	5.13

Source: Data provided by Research Unit, BMED.

Table II.11 above shows the drop-out rate in various classes in municipal schools as computed from the enrolment of children on 1 August, as compared to the number of children enrolled in the class at the end of the year. The Corporation admits that this does not constitute a true drop-out rate. It merely reflects the number of children who may have left a class in this period. Thus, even if the child has enrolled back into the system by enrolling in another municipal school, or by transferring to a private school, the BMED computes the absence of the child from a particular class as a drop-out from the system. *Table II.11* shows that dropout is highest in the first two years of schooling.

Table II.12 below presents the system-wide picture on enrolment by class, which includes all schools (municipal and privately managed), in Mumbai. But even from these data, actual drop-out and transition cannot be estimated in the absence of data on the number of repeaters and leavers. Nevertheless, by comparing the size of a class with the size of the same class in the previous year, some kind of picture emerges about the relative size of the same class within these five years (see *Table II.12*).

Table II.12. Mumbai: Enrolment by class (1994-1995, 1995-1996, 1996-1997, 1997-1998 and 1998-1999)

	Class-wise enrolment							
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
1994-1995	**255,107**	232,086	230,978	251,632	248,647	214,006	187,038	179,335
1995-1996	247,135	**229,607**	221,872	232,370	252,667	220,924	203,885	184,002
1996-1997	251,250	234,468	**227,549**	232,469	247,776	224,178	205,863	194,533
1997-1998	235,230	228,275	217,288	**220,388**	240,119	218,803	207,471	196,702
1998-1999	226,941	215,359	214,942	211,417	**238,536**	220,083	200,524	203,911

Source: Government of Maharashtra (1995, 1996, 1997, September 1998, July 1999 and July 2000).

If one examines the 1994-1995 'cohort' in the above *Table II.12*, and calculates from it the sizes of Class II (1995-1996), Class III (1996-1997), Class IV (1997-1998) and Class V (1998-1999) relative to the size of Class I (1994-1995), then one would find that the 'retention' between I and II is 90.004 per cent; between I and III 89.197 per cent; between I and IV 86.39 per cent and between I and V 93.504 per cent. The 'retention' between II and III being 99.103 per cent; between III and IV 96.853 per cent and between IV and V 108.23 per cent.

In the 'cohort' starting in 1995-1996, one would find that the 'retention' between Class I and Class II is 94.874 per cent; between Class II and III 92.673 per cent; and between Class III and IV 97.3 per cent. Between Class I and IV, 85.55 per cent of the children are retained. Another cohort starts in 1996-1997. Here the 'retention' between Class I and III is 85.55 per cent.

Therefore, in the case of the drop-out at the 'whole system' level, the largest drop-out does not appear to be between Class I and II, as was seen earlier in the case of municipal schools. Perhaps the children drop out from municipal schools to join privately managed schools. Though many do assert that there is a large turnover from municipal to privately managed schools, there does not appear to have been any research carried out to follow up children who leave with school-leaving certificates to enable them to transfer to other schools.

In Classes IV and V a curious phenomenon can be emphasized. It may be observed that in most years there are more children in Class IV than there were children in Class III of the previous year. Similarly, it can be seen that there are often more children in Class V than there were in Class IV of the previous year. This phenomenon would suggest either that there were repeaters in Class IV and V (the no-detention policy no longer applies to Class IV) or that children from other school systems outside Mumbai could be joining at this stage. Both situations could explain such data. In some cases this kind of data could also suggest admissions from unrecognized schools.

Causes of drop out

According to a study conducted in 1990 by the Municipal Corporation, 50 per cent of the children were found to drop out, due to household responsibilities, 25 per cent drop out because there is no school nearby, 10 per cent through lack of interest, and the remaining 15 per cent due to other reasons. Lambay and Chavan (1993), commenting on the above MCGB Report (1990), have elaborated on the 25 per cent of drop out which is due to distance of home from the school. They say that this is linked to the problems of transportation, the traffic and the fact that the parents need to have money and, more importantly, time, to accompany the children. They add that the South Indian language schools, especially, face drop-out after Standard IV, often because there may be no upper-primary schools in the same neighbourhood. As a result, many children may discontinue studies after completing Standard IV, if they cannot manage the distances.

A large number of children also leave municipal school with school-leaving certificates. According to Lambay and Chavan (1993), the number of children who leave school with School Leaving Certificates is on the increase each year. Recent micro-level studies in Mumbai have suggested that many children leave municipal schools to join private schools because learning levels are known to be low in municipal schools. The parents believe that "The child will learn something and so take on the additional expenditure involved" (Banerji, 2000).

The same micro-level studies also suggest that one of the major reasons for drop-out or for children not joining schools is due to the instability of the lives of those who live in slums and other squatter settlements. Banerji (2000) found from her study of Mumbai slums that "each locality had a particular set of reasons for children not being in school". In one slum, for example, every few weeks some portion of the locality was demolished. Families would either move away or relocate somewhere else in the same slum area. Due to this constant instability in their lives, many children remained out of school, with the families feeling always that their stay in the area was a temporary phase.

According to the 1991 Census (*Table II.13* below), more than 17 per cent of the child population in the age group 6-13 years was out of school. A larger percentage (19.37%) was out of school in the 6-10 age group than in the 11-13 age group (12.73%).

Table II.13. Mumbai: out-of-school children (6-13 years) (1981 and 1991)

	1981			1991		
Age group	Population	Out of school	Percentage out of school	Population	Out of school	Percentage out of school
6-10	911.024	150,061	16.47	1,037,307	200,897	19.37
11-13	493,164	68,923	13.98	562,440	71,600	12.73
6-13	1,404,208	218,984	15.59	1,599,747	275,887	17.25

Source: Census of India (1981 and 1991). Computed on the basis of Census data available by single year of age.

Child labour has not been suggested in any of the studies quoted above as a cause of drop-out at the lower-primary stage. Children in the primary school age group are too young to participate usefully in any economic activity. Census data (1991) also support this view, as may be seen in *Table II.14* below. At this age group (6-10 years), dropout is not associated significantly with participation in economic activity. At the age of 6 and 7 years – i.e. the age of the child in Classes I and II (when the maximum drop-out is observed in municipal schools), there is negligible participation in economic activity. Participation in economic activity starts at a later stage.

Table II.14 shows that the workforce participation among out-of-school boys suddenly jumps from 3.63 per cent for 9 year-old boys to 10.7 per cent for 10 year-olds.

Table II.14. Workforce participation among out-of-school children of 6-10 years of age in Mumbai (1991)

Age group	Total population		Not attending		Workers among not attending		Percentage of workers among not attending	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
6	98,567	90,810	46,367	45,700	70	100	0.15	0.22
7	103,250	100,480	15,640	17,720	210	50	1.34	0.28
8	115,440	107,460	13,260	15,050	280	130	2.11	0.86
9	87,440	85,640	7,990	10,040	290	90	3.63	0.90
10	130,400	117,820	13,960	15,170	1,500	670	10.7	4.42
Total 6-10	535,097	502,210	97,217	103,680	2,350	1,050	2.42	0.10

Source: Census of India, 1991.

How much do children learn in municipal schools?

This all-important question was addressed in relation to children in municipal primary schools by some recent micro-level studies (Banerji, 2000). Such a question can only be addressed by micro-level studies because the BMED itself does not evaluate students in the lower primary classes through the use of standardized tests. Student progress is only assessed section wise by individual class teachers on the basis of tests devised by teachers based on the class textbook.

In the micro-level studies described by Banerji (2000), the same achievement tests were administered to nearly 500 children studying in Classes III and IV in K-East municipal ward of Mumbai. Within each class, all children were tested on a one-on-one basis. The content of the test was based on material that the children had learned in Classes I and II.

Banerji reports that the results were 'surprising'. Not only were the average scores lower than expected, but the achievement levels of children in Class IV were very similar to those in Class III. But, because Class IV children had spent an additional year in school, it was expected that they would do better. But apparently, the extra year in school did not translate into a higher level of learning. The mean level and tail of the learning distribution for the children in Class IV were found to be similar to those in Class III. This puzzling result would mean in effect that an average of four years spent in school (at an annual cost of 4,393 rupees per child in Mumbai) generates learning levels worth two years only.

In exploring reasons for this result, Banerji suggests that lack of consistent remedial measures for those who lag behind, coupled with a 'no detention' policy in primary school, may be responsible. According to her, even though a teacher may be aware that some children in her class (sometimes 20-30 per cent of a class) have serious difficulties, she still feels accountable for completing the prescribed syllabus. Banerji states that "The teacher is faced with the challenging tasks of dealing with a student body with a very diverse set of competencies, on the one hand, and finishing the prescribed syllabus on the other. Children who fall behind stay behind, while the rest of the class moves ahead. Most primary school teachers take the least risky route of concentrating on those children who perform at grade level and can cope with the syllabus". Apparently, the no-detention policy was not being supplemented by remedial measures for children who had not been able to keep up with the syllabus. Therefore, though the children were 'passed on' to the next class, they were not able to remedy their shortcomings even in the next class.

The micro-level studies described above were conducted in 1997. Since then attempts have been made to usher in remedial teaching at the system-wide level through the help of NGO efforts.

Decline in municipal school enrolment and increased demand for private schooling

Though there is an overall decline in school enrolments in Mumbai, the decrease is more so in the case of municipal school enrolments. Municipal school enrolment was examined in each ward in 1995 and 1999. The number of schools has increased in some wards in this period and decreased in others. Enrolment, on the other hand, has consistently decreased in each and every ward.

Table II.15. Mumbai: number of municipal schools and their enrolment by municipal ward (1995 and 1999)

		1995		1999		Difference 1995-1999	
School number	Ward	Number of schools	Enrolment	Number of schools	Enrolment	Number of schools	Enrolment
1	A	18	7,457	18	6,447	0	-1,010
2	B	17	4,694	16	3,502	-1	-1,192
3	C	19	3,727	18	2,648	-1	-1,079
4	D	37	9,182	32	6,268	-5	-2,914
5	E	66	24,691	63	17,652	-3	-7,039
6	F (S)	71	24,596	62	17,871	-9	-6,725
7	F (N)	65	43,285	64	39,999	-1	-3,286
8	G (S)	81	36,780	77	27,038	-4	-9,742
9	G (N)	64	32,542	59	29,084	-5	-3,458
10	H (E)	61	36,213	61	32,195	0	-4,018
11	H (W)	41	17,295	40	15,341	-1	-1,954
12	K (E)	72	39,238	85	36,599	13	-2,639
13	K (W)	56	32,216	58	27,570	2	-4,646
14	L	86	49,430	82	45,594	-4	-3,836
15	M (E)	60	53,212	64	49,667	4	-3,545
16	M (W)	43	28,828	48	26,335	5	-2,493
17	N	84	53,432	85	44,696	1	-8,736

18	P(S)	34	22,046	34	19,712	0	-2,334
19	P(N)	70	47,577	70	43,996	0	-3,581
20	R(S)	22	22,078	26	21,121	4	-957
21	R(N)	63	40,660	64	34,206	1	-6,454
22	S	74	34,211	68	29,981	-6	-4,230
23	T	49	22,899	49	18,484	0	-4,415
TOTAL		1,253	686,289	1,243	596,006	-10	-90,283

Source: Data provided by BMED (1999).

Table II.15 shows that between these two points of time, municipal enrolment has declined by about 90 000 pupils. On the other hand, the share of enrolment of privately managed schools has risen in the same period, as may be seen in *Table II.16*, and *Figure II.2* presented below.

Table II.16. Mumbai: share of enrolment in schools under different management (1994-1999) (*percentages*)

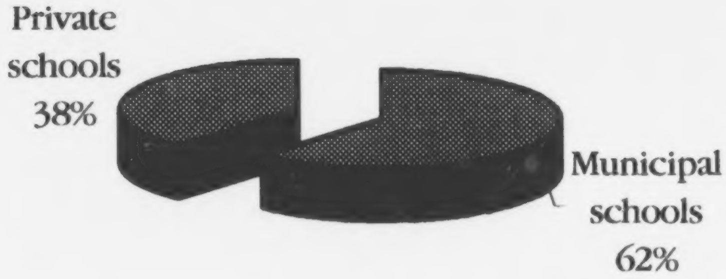
Year	Municipal	Privately managed	Total
1994-1995	61.71	38.29	100.00
1995-1996	60.65	39.35	100.00
1996-1997	59.83	40.17	100.00
1997-1998	59.54	40.46	100.00
1998-1999	59.00	41.00	100.00

Source: Government of Maharashtra, Directorate of Education. *Education at a glance* (various years). *Table 2.3* (data on central government schools not included).

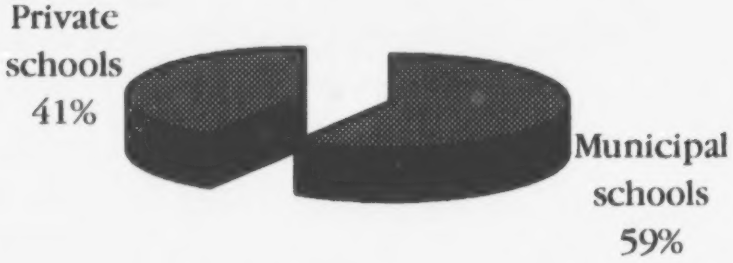
As may be seen in the above *Table II.16*, the share of enrolment of privately managed schools has risen in the past five years (1994-1999) by almost 2.71 per cent, while municipal enrolment has decreased by 2.71 per cent in the same period.

Figure II.2. Mumbai: share of enrolment in schools under different management

Total enrolment: 1994-1995



Total enrolment: 1998-1999



*Source:*Government of Maharashtra, Directorate of Education. *Education at a Glance* (various years). *Table 2.3.*

In the past two and a half decades, municipal schools have lost much ground. As may be seen in *Table II.17* below, in 1975, municipal schools carried almost 70 per cent of the total enrolment in Mumbai, whereas in 1998-99 (*Table II.16*) their share had dropped to 59 per cent.

Table II.17. Mumbai: municipal primary schools, primary schools under private management and their enrolment (1975)

Management*	Schools	Enrolment
Municipal	1,111 (65.1%)	529,308 (69.7%)
Private management	595 (34.9%)	229,799 (30.3%)
Total	1,706	759,107

Source: Data provided by BMED (1999).
* This does not include schools run by the central government.

Kamat (1999) attributes the popularity of private schooling to "the feeling (that many people have) that private schools impart quality education, which is absent in municipal schools". Banerji (2000) too, writes that even in low-income colonies in Indian cities, private schools are mushrooming, even though they charge admission fees and monthly fees. In one of the slums surveyed for her study, she found that 17 per cent of children of primary-school age went to schools other than municipal schools. This was the case even though the households in that slum were fairly poor, with an average monthly household expenditure of around 2,000 rupees (Banerji, 2000). According to Banerji, the main reason for this was the perception that children in municipal schools do not learn much. Sometimes parents were also forced to send their children to private schools because of 'limited options' in places that were not adequately served by a municipal school within an accessible distance.

The Mumbai Education Scene therefore shows that:

- Over the past few years, there has been a steady decrease in the number of children enrolled in primary schools.
- The decline in enrolment is greater in municipal schools than in schools under private management.
- The 1991 Census showed a slightly larger number of children in the 6-10 year age group to be out of school as compared to the 1981 Census, but the fact that non-enrolment and drop-out in this age group cannot be linked to child participation in work, shows that other factors may be responsible for this phenomenon.
- The 'other factors' are variously seen in this chapter to include the instability in the lives of the poor, the distance of home from school and the cost of time and energy to escort children to and from school, and school-related factors such as overcrowding and unattractiveness of schools.
- Though a large number of private and 'aided' schools running under private management also provide education in Mumbai, the clientele of these schools are drawn from among those who can afford to pay the fees and other schooling-related expenditure.
- The privately managed schools, though more expensive, are becoming increasingly popular, as compared to municipal schools. Not only is it perceived that children in municipal schools do not learn, but research evidence supports the general perception of inefficiency of municipal schools.
- A number of factors therefore are seen to be working against the education of the poor in Mumbai, whether they are problems related to their home (and its instability), the school (and its inefficiency), or the access (or lack of it) of the school from the home.

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III. THE BRIHANMUMBAI MAHANAGARPALIKA EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (BMED): MAJOR PROVIDER OF PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR THE POOR

The Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika (Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, MCGM) is responsible through its Education Department for the administration of primary education in Mumbai. In 1999, it had on its rolls more than 596,000 children in its 1,243 primary schools, offering eight different languages as medium of instruction. Another 177,000 plus children were being provided with education in primary schools aided by the Municipal Corporation.

Primary education has been a municipal function in this city since 1884 and the financial burden for the same has been shared equally between the Municipal Corporation and the State Government. The legislation in force which presently defines and governs this relationship is the Bombay Primary Education Act of 1947, which also enables the authority in charge of education to make it free and compulsory at the primary stage. But, one should hasten to add, this legislation is at present lying dormant and is not being enforced in the City of Mumbai (or anywhere else for that matter, in the State of Maharashtra, to which this particular Act applies. In fact, all the present compulsory education Acts in India are lying dormant).

To facilitate access of the poor to schools, primary education is provided free of tuition fees in all the primary schools managed and aided by the Municipal Corporation. To bring children to school, the BMED organizes annual surveys and enrolment drives in the areas surrounding the schools. It is also perhaps the only Municipality in the world which provides for education to be imparted in eight different media of instruction, that is, Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Kannad and English.

To encourage retention, the Municipal Corporation provides free textbooks to all children studying in municipal schools in Classes I through VII and free slates to children in Class I. Free milk is supplied to all primary-school children up to the Standard IV through the school-feeding programme. Health check-up of pupils, immunization and follow-up treatment of health defects is also a facility provided through municipal schools.

Role of the Corporation in primary education

A brief history

Under the Indian Constitution, the term 'State' includes the central government, the parliament, the state government and legislatures, and all the local and other authorities. Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution directs this 'State' to provide for free and compulsory education for all children until they attain the age of 14 years. Thus the responsibility for the provision of education of children up to the age of 14 years is the shared responsibility of all the four levels of government in India – the Union Government, the Federal State Government, the district level, and the local level. These levels differ, however, in the respective roles played in carrying out this responsibility.

Historically, school-level education in India has been a 'State' subject, and the Federal State Government has been responsible for administering and legislating upon it. The Constitution of Independent India, which was adopted in 1950, also ratified and continued this tradition. Later, however, through an amendment to the Constitution of India in 1976, this subject was shifted from the 'State list' on to the 'Concurrent list', i.e. the list of subjects in the

Constitution on which both, the Centre as well the Federal State Government, could legislate (it has to be mentioned that not a single concurrent legislation on education has been effected to date).

Another very recent amendment to the Constitution of India in 1992 (the 74th Amendment) has institutionalized the system of self-government even at the urban local body level. Until this Amendment, there was an absence of a 'Local list' from which local bodies, such as municipalities in cities for example, could derive their functions.

In the case of Maharashtra however (which, among the states in India may be considered to be an educationally precocious state), the State Government had devolved its responsibility for the administration of primary education to municipal areas (i.e. urban areas satisfying certain criteria of population, population density and occupational profile) upon the local governments, as far back as 1884.

Following the 74th Amendment, the State Government of Maharashtra, as expected of all the state governments, extensively amended its existing laws relating to the municipalities and devolved to the local levels a number of responsibilities regarding economic planning and social justice. However, it is necessary to clarify that the local-level bodies do not enjoy the powers of a government, as they are not assigned any police powers. They are mainly local-level institutions comprising elected representatives to identify, formulate, implement and monitor local development and welfare programmes (Thimmiah, 1998).

Responsibilities of the Municipal Government in education

The Municipal Government in Mumbai (the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika), therefore, is responsible for the primary level of education, as also for the most basic needs of conservancy, water supply, drainage, health, road communication and general development of the city by control of buildings, land use, etc. and city transport. The State Government is responsible, in Mumbai, for the secondary level and above of education, and for other such subjects as maintaining law and order, controlling crime, licensing and regulating motor vehicles, providing financial assistance to government authorities and public institutions, and deciding by appropriate legislative measures the basic structures and parameters within which the local government will function (Tinaikar, 1996).

The Municipal Corporation and the State Government differ in the perception of their role in the provision of education. While the Municipal Corporation runs 1,243 municipal primary schools in the city, the State Government does not itself run any school[1]. Instead, the State Government provides grant-in-aid to private bodies to run schools on its behalf. This difference in perception of the role between the two levels of government regarding provision of school education within the same city appears to have important consequences for the clients of the system as will be discussed later in the monograph (*Chapter V*).

The administrative set-up for primary education in the city

The Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika, in accordance with the 74th Constitutional Amendment, recently took a decision to form ward committees in 16 of its wards (Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Yearbook, 1999) and has thus furthered decentralization of its system of administration. The city is already divided into six administrative zones with 23 wards. A Deputy Municipal Commissioner supervises each zone with ward officers working under them. This structure of city administration is reflected in the organization of administration of primary education in the city. As and when the ward committees begin to function, it remains to be seen if they will bring with them any changes in the system of educational administration (Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Yearbook, 1999).

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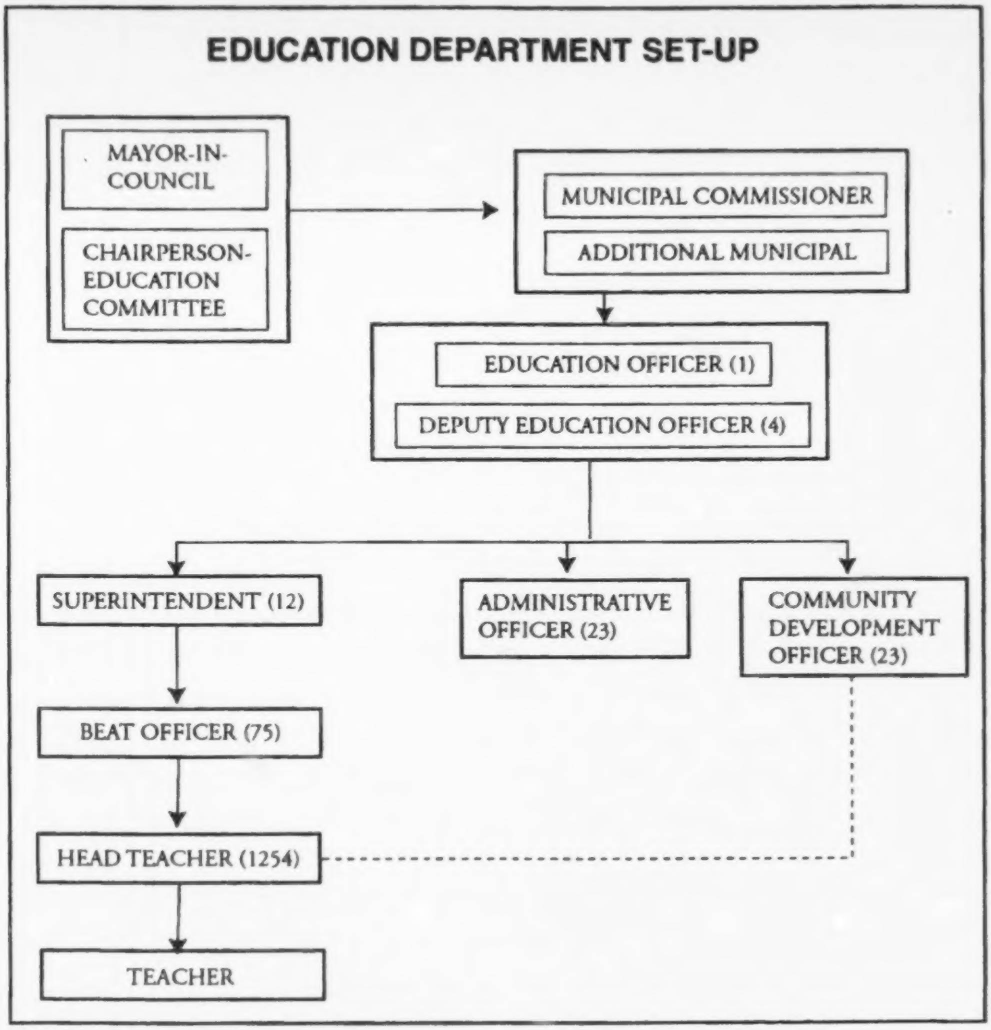
[1] The State Government does provide three technical schools, but does not otherwise directly run any schools for the provision of secondary education.

The structure of the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika makes a distinction between its policy-making and its policy-implementation organs. Policy-making is a function of the Corporation's elected body, while policy implementation is entrusted to the Municipal Commissioner who functions as head of the administration. The elected representatives or the Municipal Councillors exercise their authority over civic affairs through budgetary control, determination of taxes, approval of contracts, and other financial proposals and share in the appointing power (Pinto, 1995).

The Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika works for education through its Education Committee. Policies in respect of primary education are the function of the Education Committee, and the Municipal Commissioner as the Chief Executive in charge of administration, implements the policies framed by the Education Committee and the Corporation. He *administers* primary education through the Education Officer who is in charge of the Education Department of the Corporation. The Education Officer of the Municipal Corporation is responsible only for the administration of primary education, while the State Government retains control over academic decisions regarding the subjects, the curriculum, textbooks, etc. This division of responsibility too has important consequences for what is taught to the children, and for the way in which education is imparted. The curriculum and the textbooks being decided at the level of the state are naturally geared to the needs of all children in the state, whether in rural areas, small towns and villages, or big cities.

The administrative set-up for primary education in the city


EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SET-UP
MAYOR-IN-COUNCIL
CHAIRPERSON-EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER
ADDITIONAL MUNICIPAL
EDUCATION OFFICER (1)
DEPUTY EDUCATION OFFICER (4)
SUPERINTENDENT (12)
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (23)
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (23)
BEAT OFFICER (75)
HEAD TEACHER (1254)
TEACHER

Source, Pratham (1999)

The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai therefore, despite being the largest and the richest Municipal Corporation in India and despite providing primary education in eight languages to suit the diverse needs of the local population, is not empowered to gear its curriculum to the specific needs of the child in its city.

A look at the organizational chart will help in understanding the administrative set-up of the Education Department. The Municipal Commissioner is overall in charge of educational administration. The Additional Municipal Commissioner and the Deputy Municipal Commissioner assist him.

The Education Officer is the head of the Education Department of the Municipal Corporation, but is often an employee of the State Government on deputation to the Municipal Corporation. The Municipal Corporation, by the passage of a formal resolution, appoints an Education Officer as its employee under section 22 of the Bombay Primary Education Act, 1947 and undertakes to pay his/her salary for the period. As on officer on deputation from the State Government, he can however be recalled to State Government service at any time. He is also subject to the direct control of the state and the Director of Education in those matters where authority is vested in him individually.

The Education Officer (EO) and his staff carry out the work of the Municipal Commissioner of maintaining, aiding and accommodating primary schools. Under the Bombay Primary Schools Act, the Education Officer may appoint teachers and other staff in accordance with the directions given by the Staff Selection Committee and, subject to instruction from the Director of Education of the State, he/she has the power to promote, transfer and take all disciplinary action against staff maintained for the administration, management and control of approved schools.

The Education Department has two main wings: the Academic and the Administrative:

- the *Academic Wing* spans eight major units, primary among them being the academic administration headed by a Superintendent of Schools for each of the languages. They are in turn assisted by

86 Beat Officers (again assigned language-wise) across one or two wards. Besides this, there is a Research and Statistics Department headed by a Research Officer, a Language Development Project Unit which provides training and technology for better language teaching, an Aided Schools Unit headed by a Superintendent, an Art and Music Academy and an In-service Training Wing.

- the *Administrative Wing* is headed and managed by the three Deputy Education Officers – one Deputy EO per each of the three zones – city, suburbs and extended suburbs. The Education Officer and the Deputy Education Officers (to whom some of the administrative powers of the Education Officer are delegated) have the direct responsibility to ensure the overall performance of the Education Department. The 12 Superintendents, who supervise the work of about 6 Beat Officers (BOs), each report to them. The Beat Officers are primarily responsible for academic achievement in the schools. Each Beat Officer is in charge of supervising 16 to 17 schools on average. The city has been divided into 23 wards with an Administrative Officer who, until a year ago, was only in charge of the physical facilities in the schools. Such an arrangement dates back to the early 1920s and 1930s, to the period when administration of education in urban areas was transferred to the municipalities, and inspection remained the function of the State Government. An important reason for retaining wide powers of control, including the inspecting power with the State Government, was because the largest part of the expenditure on primary education was borne by the State Government. Administrative Officers (AOs) these days are also concerned with the academic side. The present Education Officer felt that Administrative Officers, being basically teachers, should not lose sight of this fact and should remain concerned about the academic development of children. Therefore, with both the Beat Officers and the AO visiting schools regularly, and both being empowered to inspect the academic side of school life, teachers now have additional reinforcement and support and also more reason to stay 'on their toes'.

Mechanism for financing of education

India is a union of states with a federal structure and a parliamentary democracy. The bulk of the powers of taxation and resource-raising capacity under the Indian Constitution are with the Central Government. Substantial funds flow from the Centre to the states through institutional mechanisms like the Finance Commission and the Planning Commission – about 60 per cent of the state budgets as a whole are financed by Central devolution.

Budgets in India have two components, i.e. the Plan component and the Non-Plan component. Non-Plan component is the committed expenditure on maintenance of ongoing programmes. Funds for Non-Plan activities are allocated on the recommendation of the Finance Commission. A Finance Commission is appointed every five years. It periodically reviews the financial relationship between the Centre and the states and it also decides the principles and the formula by which allocable funds are to be distributed among the states. Grants/funds for development, i.e. the Plan component of various sectors, are allocated through the Planning Commission.

The *Planning Commission*, set up in 1950, plays the major role in providing Central assistance to State Plans. State Plans are financed partly by the state's own resources and the balance by Central assistance (Kurian, 2000). The allocation of Central assistance to State Plans is based on a formula approved by the National Development Council (an Apex body headed by the Prime Minister, and comprising all members of the Union Cabinet, Chief Ministers of States, members of the Planning Commission, etc.). Ayyar (1993) considers Central assistance to be not merely a source of Plan finances, but it is also used as an instrument to direct and to sustain 'Plan' priorities. Any shortfall in Plan expenditure on priority sectors (which include elementary education and adult literacy) would, says Ayyar, "entail a proportionate cut in Central assistance".

In certain crucial areas of development, the Centre has also been promoting specific schemes through the mechanism of 'Centrally Sponsored Schemes'. There are a number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes available for promotion of universalization of elementary education, adult literacy, vocationalization of secondary education, etc. states can have access to Centrally Sponsored Schemes by putting up for approval and transfer of funds to their states, their proposals for funding, for example, of non-formal education, or for midday meals, etc.

The Federal State Government, can, and does, also generate its own funds through tax and non-tax sources, such as motor-vehicles tax, entertainment tax, profession tax, sales tax, interest receipts, etc.

State Governments, in turn, are required to transfer funds for the expenditures of local bodies. The 74th Amendment to the Constitution (1992) has provided for another body to be set up at the state level to play a part in the transfer of funds from the state level to the local levels. According to this Amendment, the State Governments are required to appoint 'State Finance Commissions' to recommend transfer of financial resources from the State Governments to the local bodies in the form of tax shares, grants in aid, tax assignment and through any other measures needed to improve their financial resources (Thimmaih, 1998).

Maharashtra: expenditure on education

From the income of each State, allocations are made to different sectors of expenditure. An illustration of the Budget of the State of Maharashtra, and its education budget are presented in *Tables III.1, III.2* and *III.3* for the fiscal year 1996-97. *Table III.1* below illustrates the Plan and Non-Plan budgetary expenditure of the state, *Table III.2* illustrates how much of this total budget is spent on education and *Table III.3* further shows how the Education Department distributes this allocated amount among elementary, secondary, higher and adult education.

Table III.1. Maharashtra: total Plan and Non-Plan budgetary expenditure (budget estimate 1996-1997) (*in millions of rupees*)

Plan	Non-Plan	Total
37,470.5	162,037.8	199,508.3

Source: GOI, 1998. *Annual financial statistics of the education sector 1997-1998.* Ministry of Human Resource Development (Table 1.1).

Table III.2. Maharashtra: Plan and Non-Plan budgetary expenditure on education by education department (1996-1997) (*in millions of rupees*)

Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Percentage to total budget
3,580.7	30,906.9	34,487.6	17.87

Source: GOI, 1998. *Annual financial statistics of the education sector 1997-1998.* Ministry of Human Resource Development (Table 1.2).

As may be seen in *Table III.2*, 17.8 per cent of the total State Budget went towards education. *Table III.3* (below) further shows that Elementary Budget was allocated around 45 per cent of the total estimated budget.

Table III.3. Maharashtra: expenditure on elementary, secondary, higher and adult education (1995-1997) (*in millions of rupees*)

Level of education	1996-1997 (BE)	
	Expenditure on education	Percentage to total budget
Elementary	15,528.6	45.10
Secondary	13,514.1	39.24
Higher	327.1	9.50
Adult	120.4	0.35
Others*	1,998.8	5.81
Total	34,432.9	100.0

Source: GOI, 1998. *Annual financial statistics of the education sector 1997-1998*. Ministry of Human Resource Development (*Tables 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8* and *1.9*).

* The category 'others' includes Plan and Non-Plan expenditure on language development, technical education and other education by the Education Department.

Over the period 1993 to 1997, amounts ranging between 18 to 21 per cent of the total expenditure of the State of Maharashtra were allocated to education (GOI, 1998). Of this, over the same period, elementary education received between 42 to 45 per cent of the annual expenditure on education by the state (GOI, 1998).

Therefore, despite the current 'emphasis' on universal elementary education, allocation to elementary education continues to be less than 50 per cent of the state's educational budget.

Mumbai: income and expenditure on education

Large cities in India have local as well as external sources of revenue. Local sources of revenue of large cities usually include locally raised taxes (such as property tax, octroi, taxes on vehicles, animals, etc.), revenue raised from user charges (such as for water and electricity) and revenue from fees and fines of various types. The external sources of revenue of city municipal corporations are their share in state taxes and the grant-in-aid to the city. However, Misra (1998) states that the size and form of State Government grants to local bodies depend on the nature of state local relations. According to him, such grant generally cover only a small portion of the total spending of large cities, especially in octroi states.

In the case of Mumbai, the bulk of its resources are generated from its own sources. *Table III.4* below presents the income of the Municipal Corporation, Mumbai, according to sources of income, as illustrated for the fiscal year 1996-1997.

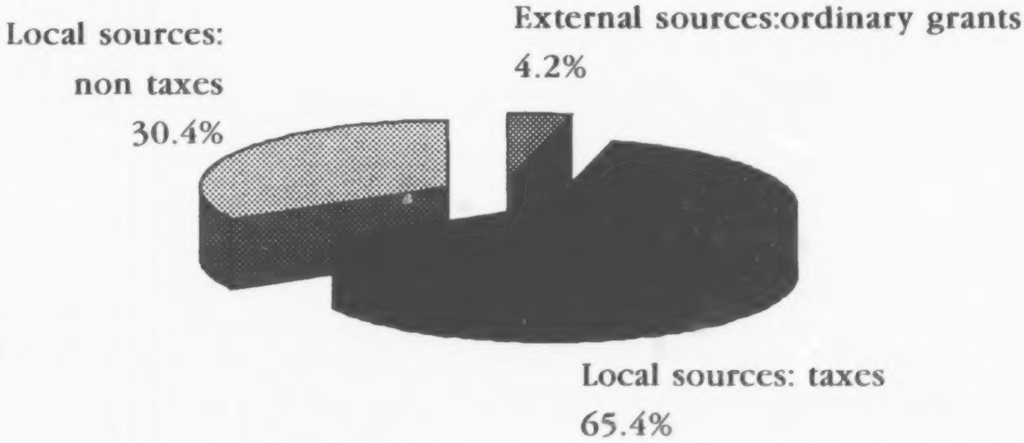
Table III.4. Sources of income: Municipal Corporation, Mumbai City (1996-1997) (*in millions of rupees*)

Local sources of income		External sources of income		Total income
Taxes*	Non-taxes**	Total	Ordinary grants	
14,487.94	6,740.06	21,228	935.07	22,163.07
(65.49%)	(30.41%)	(95.78%)	(4.22%)	(100%)

Source: GOI, 1999. *Statistical Abstracts, 1998.*
* Local taxes include taxes on property, octroi, terminal, trades and calling, animals and vehicles, etc.
** Non-taxes include user charges for water, electricity, etc.

As can be seen from *Table III.4* above, and *Figure III.1* below, 95.78 per cent of the income of the Local Government is generated from its own resources, with little dependence on the grants from and through the State Government.

Figure III.1.Sources of income: Municipal Corporation, Mumbai City (1996-1997)



From this income, the corporation spends about 13-16 per cent annually on education. *Table III.5* below presents the ordinary income and ordinary expenditure of the city and also the amount spent on education in the years 1990-1991 to 1996-1997.

The term 'ordinary expenditure' includes expenditure on items such as general administration and collection of revenue, public health, safety and convenience, education, public works and other miscellaneous expenditures. Thus 'ordinary expenditure' is revenue expenditure minus the amount spent towards 'repayment of loan'. Repayment of loan varied from 8.13 per cent of the total revenue income in 1990-1991 to 1.27 per cent in 1994-1995.

Table III.5. Municipal Corporation, Mumbai City: total income and expenditure and expenditure on education (1994-1995 to 1996-1997) (*in millions of rupees*)

Year	Total ordinary income	Ordinary expenditure	Expenditure on education	
			Amount	Percentage of ordinary expenditure
1994-95	16,218.43	14,537.01	2,343.98	16.12
1995-96	18,235.76	18,384.57	2,608.54	14.19
1996-97	22,182.42	22,793.72	2,982.65	13.08

Source: GOI, 1999. *Statistical Abstract, 1998.* Income and expenditure of Corporations, *Table 37.1*, p. 538.

As may be seen from *Table III.5*, though the Municipal Corporation spends around 13 to 16 per cent of its total ordinary expenditure on education, the percentage of expenditure going to education has been nearer 13 per cent than 16 per cent, indicating a declining trend in the percentage of expenditure going towards the education of the poor.

Some 96 per cent of the municipal education budget goes towards salaries (Pratham, 1998). The Yearbook of the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika shows the municipal income for the year 1998-1999 to be 50,184.8 millions of rupees, and its expenditure at 46,856.3 millions of rupees. Out of this, the expenditure on education was only 3,777.8 millions of rupees or 8.06 per cent of the total municipal expenditure (*Table III.6*).

Table III.6. Budgeted income of Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika and expenditure on the education budget (1998-1999) (*in millions of rupees*)

Income	Expenditure (Total)	Expenditure on education
50,184.8	46,856.3	3,777.8,(8.06%)

Source: Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Yearbook, 1998-1999.

It is a cause of concern that barely 4 per cent of the education budget of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation goes towards non-salary expenditure. But this kind of situation is true not just for Mumbai, but is consistent with the situation prevailing throughout the country. Dreze and Sen (1995) have documented that salaries have been absorbing over 90 per cent of the recurring expenditure on education. According to them, "Recurring expenditure on elementary education accounts for 98 per cent of the total government expenditure on elementary education; salaries account for 96 per cent of the recurring expenditure; teachers' salaries account for 97 per cent of all salaries".

The Mumbai municipal education budget is further divided among primary schools, aided schools and secondary schools (*Table III.7*).

Table III.7. Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika education budget 1998-1999 (*in millions of rupees*)

BMC primary	Aided	BMC secondary	Total
3,014.62 (81.04%)	415.63 (11.17%)	289.62 (7.79%)	3,719.72 (100%)

Source: Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Yearbook, 1998-1999.

Table III.7 above shows that one fifth of the municipal education budget is allocated to the heads which are not directly related to its allotted mandate of providing primary education to the masses, and only 81 per cent of the municipal education budget goes to municipal primary schools.

Aid to schools managed by private bodies

The Municipal Corporation has been following a practice of providing a 'grant in aid' to primary schools which fulfil certain criteria prescribed by it, such as payment of salaries to its employees through banks at the same scale of pay as employees of municipal schools, adherence to a prescribed nominal fees structure for primary classes (Rupees 15.00 rupees for Classes I and II and 20.00 rupees for Classes III and IV), etc. Schools accepting grant-in-aid from the Municipal Corporation are required to admit 80 per cent of their students from the local area, appoint staff according to prescribed rules, subscribe to the provident fund scheme for employees and agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the Education Department of the Municipal Corporation. These schools are also required to follow the curricula prescribed by the government and to allow the government to inspect them annually.

The number of schools that the BMC aids has now been curtailed. Up to 1994-1995, the Corporation aided an additional 10 primary schools each year. However, since 1995, this practice has been stopped, except in the case of the very needy and vernacular-medium schools.

Municipal schools: infrastructure

A study of school infrastructure in six wards of the city (Fernandes, 1995), found schools to be 'uniformly drab'. As such they did not present an attractive and cheerful face to a small child. Many of the school buildings needed repairs. Doors, windows, tiles needed replacement. Sewage pipes were frequently choked, as a result of which, the toilets, though existing were unusable. There was only one cleaner - certainly not sufficient to maintain a hygienic and functional environment. Some of the findings of this study, which inspected 293 schools (691 classrooms), show just how bad the situation can be:

(i) *Sanitation*: 50 per cent of the sampled schools (293 schools) did not have separate toilet arrangements for girls, boys and teachers. In 19 of the schools, toilets simply did not exist. In 181 out of 293 schools the sanitation facilities were not adequate, even when judged by the Municipal Corporation's own norms.

(ii) *Drinking water:* Here too, according to the norms, 231 out of the 293 schools had inadequate facilities. Eighteen schools did not even have a tap.

(iii) *Lighting*: It was found that 22 out of the 691 classrooms inspected had no windows, and 62 classrooms had no electricity connection and therefore no facilities for lights or fans.

(iv) *Ventilation*: There were no fans in 167 out of 691 classrooms, even though Mumbai can be unbearably hot and humid in summer.

(v) *Seating arrangements*: In 295 out of the 691 classrooms, the seating arrangements were in need of repair.

(vi) *Blackboards*: 110 blackboards out of the 691 blackboards in the classrooms were of poor quality.

(vii) *Class size*: Whereas the prescribed class size was 40, the study, using a range up to 55 as 'acceptable', found that in 201 out of 691 classrooms, there were between 56 to 70 children and in 71 classrooms, there were more than 70 children.

Since these were all Standard I classrooms, can one imagine 'joyful learning' taking place in a small classroom (73.8 per cent were not of adequate size) with 70 or so children and only one teacher? And one would not blame the teacher for wishing for a smaller class size.

Teachers for the citizens of tomorrow

The Municipal Corporation employs a very large teaching staff for its primary schools, in which education is imparted in eight languages. The BMED is thus responsible for recruiting, training, evaluating and managing a teaching force larger, perhaps, than any other in the world. *Table III.8* below gives an idea of the number of teachers employed by the BMED primary schools alone.

Table III.8. Number of teachers employed in BMED primary schools (Standards I-VII)

Number of teachers								
Marathi	Hindi	Gujarati	Tamil	Telugu	Kannand	English	Urdu	Total
7,372	3,212	852	450	278	281	340	2,768	15,554

Source: Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Education Department, 1999.

Over fifteen and a half thousand teachers are employed by the BMED in their primary schools, each of which is providing instruction in one of these eight languages. Another 2,322 teachers are employed in BMED secondary schools (the BMED also runs 51 secondary schools).

Besides these, the teachers employed in the recognized and aided schools of the BMED, even indirectly, become its responsibility. While it pays the salaries of teachers in the aided schools, it assumes responsibility for the rest through the monitoring of the implementation of the Maharashtra Employees of Private Schools Act. There are 346 such privately managed but Government-funded primary schools, with 3,528 primary teachers. Thus not only does the Municipal Corporation pay for its own teachers, but it also picks up the salary bill for another set of primary teachers equal to almost a quarter of its primary teaching force which is working in the aided schools.

In a country where a government salary is much sought after, the job of a teacher in a municipal school is very coveted indeed. More so, because the municipal teachers' salaries are better than those of their counterparts in the State Government. The Municipal Corporation therefore has little trouble in attracting and selecting from a large number of applicants each time it advertises for staff.

A person with two years of teachers' training after his/her school-leaving certificate is eligible to become a primary-school teacher. After 10 years of primary teaching she/he becomes eligible to be posted as Deputy Head Teacher and another two to three years later as headteacher of a primary school. Five years' experience as headteacher makes him/her eligible to be a Beat Officer in the BMED and on track for a career in administration of education at the area level. With 50 per cent of the posts of Beat Officer being reserved for aspirants from among headteachers, the BMED ensures itself an administrative cadre sensitive to the concerns of primary-school teachers.

About 500 teachers retire annually and an almost equal number are taken on every year through a long and elaborate process of recruitment and selection.

The schools that teachers are posted to are, as far as possible, chosen according to the convenience of the teacher. For the primary Classes I-IV, one teacher is appointed for each class, with no extra teachers for games or other activities. 'Special Teachers', as they are called, for the teaching of music, arts and crafts, are appointed only for Classes V-VII (at upper-primary stage). At the lower-primary stage, all of these activities are supposed to be taken care of by the class teacher in the 46 periods taken per week.

In-service training

Though newly appointed teachers are sent to their posts without any orientation, the Municipal Corporation provides for continued in-service training of its teachers through its own in-service training centre, which it has had since 1961.

For teachers of Classes I-IV, this centre provides courses of 21 days' duration in the production of teaching material, music and art and in the teaching of science, mathematics and social studies. The last being available to teachers up to Class VII. Headteachers and deputy headteachers are trained through a nine-day course in educational administration.

The face of in-service training appears to have changed considerably over the past decade or two. The Municipal Corporation Yearbook for the year 1985-86 reports that courses for music, arts and physical education were of 10 weeks' duration. In addition to this, special courses for science, social service, physical education, etc. of six weeks' duration were also organized during that year.

Perhaps the reason for the shorter courses of today may have been that only 194 teachers out of the over 17,000-strong primary teaching force could be accommodated for the 21-day training courses in the entire year, while only another 189 could be trained through the special six-week courses.

A sea change in the in-service training strategy has been seen with the introduction of the State-wide Massive and Rigorous Training (Primary Teachers) SMART (PT) programme. This programme of training was set up to introduce all the primary teachers to the concepts and skills required for competency-based teaching of primary classes. In an effort to improve quality of teaching, of learning and of achievement levels of pupils, this method emphasizes standards of competencies to be mastered by at least a critical percentage of the students. In the past three years, 9,109 teachers of Classes I and II, 9,597 teachers of Classes III and IV and 2,256 teachers of Class V underwent this training at a cost of almost 13,050,000 rupees to the state. Mumbai is waiting eagerly to witness the impact of these efforts.

Another noticeable change is that the primary school-classrooms have begun to present a more cheerful look, with more colourful charts, posters and dangling mobile pictures, which may at least convey a more welcoming message to the child. To keep the teachers motivated, a system of awards has been instituted at the local, state and national levels for teachers, one being the Mayor's award to 10 or 15 of the best teachers each year. Even so, all does not seem to be satisfactory in this department. Though the primary teachers of the BMED are considered to be well paid and well qualified, there are still other problems. For example, Lambay and Chavan (1993) say that "the numerical picture is satisfactory, but the qualitative picture does not appear so. It has been pointed out by several studies including those of the BMED itself that the teachers lack dynamism, sensitivity and initiative. This may be ascribed to a number of factors such as bureaucratic working, job security, lack of motivation in a huge unwieldy system, etc.".

Added to this problem, the same authors find that the teachers have a low self-image because BMED schools are looked upon as 'inferior schools' catering to the poor. The 'Pratham' publication considers the bottom line to be the 'attitude'. There seems to be a general air of resignation that 'these' children will not go far. With this attitude, it would be surprising if the teachers or the parents really took pains to see that these children learn well (Pratham, 1998).

Making a difference – Curricular and extra-curricular efforts

In its efforts to make a difference, the BMED's role is circumscribed by its role relationships with the State and Central governments. It is the State Government, which decides the content and process of primary education within the whole state, including within the city of Mumbai. The BMED's role is restricted to the effective management and efficient administration of the schools, teachers and the curriculum transaction process. On its own, the BMED does not introduce changes in curriculum.

The recent training of teachers through the 'State-wide Massive and Rigorous Training Programme for Primary Teachers' (SMART-PT) is an illustration of this role of the State Government. The State Government had designed a new competency-based curriculum and had also prepared new textbooks for the execution of the curriculum. The state then also arranged for 'massive and rigorous' programmes of training of primary teachers for implementation of the new competency-based approaches.

What the BMED does, to make a difference, is to provide that little 'extra' that can mean so much to children from the slums. It provides nourishment for their bodies and their spirits in the form of milk and joyful learning through music, arts and dance.

Daily milk

One of the major initiatives to attract children and provide them with nourishment to enable them to stay healthy and study well is the school-feeding programme. The Municipal Corporation has, since

1972, been providing milk to primary-school children. At one time, snacks or peanuts were also distributed, but this was discontinued in 1985. When the number of children increased, it was forced to compromise on the snacks but the milk for Classes I-IV continues as usual.

Box III.1. The municipal school milk programme

Every morning at about 11 a.m. and every afternoon around 1.30 p.m., sweet milk from the government-owned R.A. dairy is delivered to the schools. Each school has been provided with one stainless-steel tank and 50 glasses. Class by class, the children come up to the 'milk area' (which, incidentally, is at the drinking-water taps), and each child is handed a glass of milk and watched while it is gulped down. The overseers then take back the glasses, wash them and get them ready for the next class of children which is lining up.

The 1985 Corporation Yearbook mentions that in that year, sweet sliced bread was distributed. The 1995 Yearbook reports that children received sprouted grains. In fact even the 1998-1999 Yearbook reports that "milk and snacks in the form of sprouted seed grains" were supplied to 460,000 students of municipal schools studying in Standard I to IV. A massive exercise by any standards. However, the distribution of snacks with milk is not carried out in every school. Snacks are now distributed only in the more remote schools where the dairy van does not yet go and/or in schools where voluntary agencies, such as the preventive and social medicine departments of certain hospitals and some women's organizations, prepare snacks and supply them to the schools.

There can be no doubt, however, about the usefulness of a measure such as this. According to teachers in the schools, many children, whether out of necessity or choice, do not eat before they come to school. Some come to school only for the 'midday meal'. The little break from the class routine and the nourishment, seem to perk up the little ones and make them alert in class.

Drama, music and sports

There are a large number of competitions and functions organized each year. These events are either organized by the BMED itself, or open to the participation of BMED schools. The average home that the BMED pupil comes from usually lacks opportunities for children to develop abilities in music and arts. Recognizing this, the BMED provides in-service training to its teachers in music and arts so as to be able to introduce music and arts- related activities to the children.

Another programme that used to find a mention among BMED activities in the past but no longer does so, involves arrangements it had made for providing facilities for the all- round development of children after school hours – in the form of play centres called 'Bal Bhawans' (literally, 'Children's Houses'). The Bal Bhawans (of which there were 35 in 1975, 47 in 1980-1981 and 46 in 1985-1986), provided play and recreational opportunities for the children. This facility no longer appears in reports of BMED activities. A programme of scouts and guides, however, has continued over the years.

Pushing for equity

In order to facilitate the education of special children and children at risk and to develop support systems for them, the BMED has taken a number of steps, such as: (i) special schools for mentally retarded children, (ii) education in the mother tongue for migrant children,

(iii) parallel classes for weak children, (iv) non-formal education for out-of-school children, and (v) school-readiness programmes for new enrolees.

(i) *Special schools*: The BMED has been running schools for mentally retarded students since 1965. At present there are 18 such special schools in which a total of 825 students receive education. Here, too, it is the State Government, which provides the guidelines for the syllabi of these schools.

(ii) *Education in the mother tongue, even for migrants:* The fact that Mumbai is an industrial and commercial centre has been attracting migrants from many other parts of the country. The residents of Bombay therefore speak a diverse array of languages. It has always been the policy of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation to provide primary education to the child in its mother tongue. The actual languages offered have differed over the years. For example, in 1949-1950, to accommodate children of people displaced from West Pakistan after the partition of India, five new Sindhi schools and six new English schools were set up (Sharma, 1989). Apparently the migrating Sindhi speaking-population was equally keen to adjust to its new surroundings and thus Sindhi as a medium of instruction in Corporation schools in Bombay was soon discontinued because there was no more a demand for it, as is the case with another language – Malayalam.

(iii) *Non-formal education classes:* Non-formal centres target the older children of 9-14 years old, who have either never been to school or have dropped out. These operate at timings according to the convenience of the group of children they are catering to and at a location convenient to the child. The classes are small (up to 25 children per class). They aim at providing the child with opportunities for literacy, at the very least, and an opportunity to join mainstream schooling after being prepared up to the level of Class II or III. These centres also prepare them for tests and examinations such as those faced by children belonging to the formal stream. Over the years, non-formal centres appeared to be meeting with some success. For example, whereas in 1985, only 184 children appeared for the annual examination, by 1995, the number of centres had increased to 208 and had an enrolment of 5,668 children. In 1998-1999, the School Social Service Project reported that 10,298 drop-outs were brought back to school. The number of centres has decreased, however, and according to the latest figures, there are now only 135 with 3,837 children. This could either mean that not so many centres are needed any more, or that less attention is being paid to them.

(iv) *Parallel classes:* The BMED follows a policy of 'no detention', which means that from Classes I to IV, no child shall be detained in a class. This is based on the belief that at this tender age no child should be labelled as a 'failure' case. Lack of achievement by the child in acquiring the necessary competence is to be taken as an indication that greater efforts need to be made. For example, a child who is promoted to the next class with less than the required levels of learning achievement is to be kept under observation, given individualized guidance and instruction, tested from time to time and his/her progress noted systematically on a report card. Thus, the children are in effect in a parallel class. In Classes III and IV, at the beginning of the year, students are tested in language and mathematics based on the syllabus for Class II. Thus at each stage, students are to be detected for 'parallel classes' attention. To what extent this actually happens is not too clear.

(v) *Competency-based groups:* A new scheme, recently introduced, has been the identification of students in each primary class into three competency-based groups of 'achievers', 'average' and 'non-achievers'. The success or otherwise of this scheme remains to be seen. Right now, it is still too new. There are differences of opinion on whether or not children in one class should be classified into groups based on 'competence'. On the other hand, in the view of the 'Pratham' activist, Rukmini Banerji: "Sometimes some drastic efforts are needed and this just might work in bringing specialized instruction to each of the three groups".

(vi) *School-readiness programme:* The BMED does not as yet run any pre-school classes, though it has been pointed out by many (Chitnis, 1987; Desai, 1989) that one of the factors in the differential achievement of children from poor homes attending Corporation schools, as compared to those from better-off homes and attending private schools, may be the fact that the latter usually attend a pre-school. To somewhat compensate for this lag, the BMED has now started school-readiness summer classes for children who are to be enrolled in Class I just after the summer break. In the past year, 239 summer classes of four-weeks' duration were conducted in April and May and 8,557 students attended them. Another programme is also provided for those children who were not able to attend the pre-school summer course. This programme, 'The Pre-School Preparation Class', is described as "a combination of pre-primary education and eight weeks syllabus" (BMED, 1999). Together, it has been seen that the two programmes have helped in decreasing the early drop-out rate and are perceived to help the child to learn better.

Some special structures have been established to support these efforts of the BMED. One of these is the recently established 'Education Post'; another is its Research and Statistics Unit. Last, but not least, is its Communities Outreach programme, which works through its Community Development Officer (CDO).

Education posts

Another recent development in the past year geared to the service of children at risk is the 'Education Post'. The 'Education Post' aims at making each school into "a community- approved educational centre in the locality around the school" (BMED, 1999). The Education Post collects all sorts of primary education-related information and shares this with opinion leaders in the community and with many others who may require it. It would be the function of the Education Post to maintain continually updated information about the community around the school, the children attending and not attending and, in general, serve as a continuous link with the community. Greater Mumbai has been divided into 450 Education Posts. At present only about 30 Education Posts are functional, but over the year the others are expected to be set up.

Up to now, annual surveys conducted by municipal schools for identification of non- enrolled children had been the main link of the schoolteachers with the community. During these annual surveys (usually conducted in June) the teachers of the primary schools conduct a house-to-house survey of the areas around the school.

Now, however, with the Education Posts which are steadily being established, it is hoped that a continuous 'on-line' linkage with the community can be developed to attract greater enrolment, contain drop-out, reduce stagnation and wastage and help to develop ways in which the attendance and achievement levels of children could improve.

School Community Development Office

Most of the activities mentioned above, which received a boost in the International Year of the Child, are now maintained through the BMED's School Community Development Office. This Department, started in 1985 and headed by a Community Development Officer, does the job of maintaining the Education Department's links with society in order to provide services, which will aid students at risk. This Department maintains links, for example, with the NGOs who provide food to the school-feeding programme, with NGOs who assist its non-formal education centres, and with those who help in collecting donations in cash and kind.

Community outreach through the intervention of Community Development Officers (CDOs) had been shown to be successful in significantly reducing the drop-out rate in the MCGB schools to which they were attached as part of a project conducted by the College of Social Work. Lambay and Chavan (1993) have identified this as a key facility that needs to be strengthened. They suggested that an extensive net is needed to address various problems, which the children face.

At present CDOs are still employed by the BMED, but they are spread too thinly on the ground (one CDO per ward of about 16 to 85 schools) to be of much practical utility. The solution, according to Lambay and Chavan (1993), would be to find ways of extending this social service facility without increasing the permanent staff employed by the BMED.

Research Unit and Statistical Sections

In order to act upon a problem, it is necessary to be aware of it. In order to become aware of the problems in educating children of the poor, the Bombay Municipal Corporation has had since 1955, a research section to carry out analytical studies of problems such as drop-out, stagnation and wastage, as well as to evaluate different schemes and projects. This department was later merged with the statistical unit, in 1989, and since then it has maintained and monitored information related to students, teachers and other personnel. Apart from the ongoing work of this unit, the BMED has also been teaming up with other research and social-work institutes in Mumbai. It is due to this collaboration that the present extra intervention efforts have been started.

For example, in 1971 a social work research and training organization started a project at one of the municipal schools in Ward A. Through a large number of wide-ranging interventions related to enrolment, remedial education, non-formal education and community participation, it was able to show positive results. In the International Year of the Child, this project was taken over by the BMED and was extended to 15 centres (Desai, 1989). Such experimental efforts have led to the wide introduction by the BMED of some of the special programmes for the children from the slums, such as the School-readiness programme, Parallel Classes, Summer Classes, etc.

Another research study, carried out in collaboration with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, resulted in 1979-1980 in the setting up of non-formal education centres for the education of working children and others who were not able to attend school.

Notwithstanding the efforts made by the BMED, it acknowledges that there is still much to be done before it can say it has reached each and every child. Some of the problems that still pose a challenge being:

- The large number of children who are out of school – either due to non-enrolment, drop out or simply absenteeism. Efforts need to be made to understand who is out of school and why, and to do something about it.
- The low levels of attainment make the process of primary education a struggle for many of the children. Each child needs to be helped to overcome his/her particular educational hurdles.
- The shifting populations dare the municipal schools to keep up with them to provide the needed infrastructure for schools. The quality of upkeep of the schools and the classrooms needs to be improved in order to make 'every school beautiful'.
- The teachers of these schools have a harder task than most. Since the home environments of the students are unable to provide educational support, if any learning is to take place, it needs to take place within the classroom. Unless the teacher is fired with a missionary zeal, it may not be possible to ensure that 'every child is learning'.
- Money is a problem everywhere. In the case of the Municipal Corporation schools in Mumbai, 96 per cent of the budget goes towards teachers' salaries. Consequently, little is left for other inputs.

The BMED acknowledges that, on its own, it has its limitations in being able to reach each and every child. Therefore it is trying to build partnerships with voluntary organizations to meet the challenges faced in achieving universal elementary education in Mumbai.

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IV. THE RISE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL INITIATIVES

Non-governmental initiatives in education

One of the striking differences that the observer on the scene will note between the municipal educational efforts for the poor in Mumbai as compared to those of other major cities in India, is the variety of academic and non-academic interventions being made by the BMED, and the number of *Non-Governmental Organizations* (NGOs) that are associated with the BMED in working among the municipal school pupils and the communities they come from.

Though civil society in this part of India has been, by tradition, active and concerned (and this is evidenced in the large number of non-governmental initiatives working for the cause of the poor), governmental and non-governmental institutions had remained, by and large, separate entities, working independently to supplement rather than to complement each other's efforts.

A brief history

In the Mumbai of today, however, governmental and other organizations are seen to be working together for education of the poor. This is one of the features that would surprise the visitor from, say, New Delhi or some other major city in India. But, it appears that in Mumbai, too, this working together is of fairly recent origin.

Collaboration between a statutory organization and a university affiliated programme was first seen in Bombay, in the 1970s, when the College of Social Work (affiliated to the University of Bombay) took up first one project in some municipal schools in Colaba, an area in South Bombay in 1970, and then another in 1973 in Danda. In both these projects, a full-time social worker was appointed through grant assistance from non-governmental funding agencies. Later, in 1979 (the International Year of the Child), the then Education Officer of the Municipal Corporation, Mrs Kusum Kamat, requested the College of Social Work to establish 15 additional centres with grant-in-aid from the Municipal Corporation to the college. It became possible to locate the funds for this work by innovatively placing the expenditure under the budgetary head of 'remedial education' (Desai, 1989). In this way, the project covered some of the major slums from South to North Bombay, and from North East to North West, covering a population of 80,000 children from the most vulnerable groups in the city.

In due course of time, in 1985, the Education Department of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay took over full administrative responsibility for the project. Therefore, with the initiative taken in 1979, the Education Department of the Corporation crossed a threshold in its relations with supporting non-governmental organizations. And, it is this venture which is probably responsible for setting the stage for future large-scale collaborations in the interest of the children from deprived communities.

Many of the child-friendly outreach programmes, such as the Non-Formal Education centres, the appointment of Community Development Officers, the School-readiness programmes, and the formation of school committees which were initiated during this period, became part of the regular activities of the Municipal Corporation in many of its schools.

At the national level, too, the 1980s have been defined as a period when changes were seen in the relationship between NGOs and the state. Sen (1999) in a study of State-NGO relations in India of the post-independence era, found the nature of the state to have played an important role in shaping these relations since the 1980s. According to him, it was the state's ability to set the development agenda which allowed it not only to increase its control over the NGO sector, but also to define delivery and service provision roles for NGOs. Desai (1999) who made a recent study of the NGO sector in Mumbai, has commented on changes in this scene even in the past 10 years or so: With the changing expectations of NGOs in the international arena, she feels there has also been among development NGOs in Mumbai, a clear trend away from direct involvement in service provision towards a concern for the broader processes of development – a concern for people rather than 'projects'. With this, in Mumbai, too, one observes a greater NGO involvement in training, awareness raising, community mobilization, formation of community organizations, capacity building, and institutional development.

An overview of NGO activity

As mentioned earlier, Mumbai has a tradition of NGO activity. Many NGOs work among different target groups with activities, which include the education of never-enrolled children or school drop-outs. NGOs' efforts in Mumbai have been classified as being essentially on three levels: large funded organizations such as CASP-PLAN, SHED, CORO and others; caste specific organizations among Hindus and some institutionalized groups among other religions (e.g. Anjuman-I Islam, convents, etc.); and unorganized, scattered small community organizations.

NGOs working *mainly* on education, according to Lambay and Chavan (1993), are few. Even among these, they feel that it is only the funded organizations and the Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) which are evident among the recently settled slums and pavement dwellers. The objective of the funded NGOs working for the vulnerable groups in such areas, is that of achieving social change through empowerment of the poor. In such processes, education is seen as a tool, and the NGO may not necessarily be pursuing educational programmes alone. The *Committee of Resource Organizations* (CORO) for example, put the emphasis on adult education in suburban slums in the north-eastern part of Mumbai and has a coverage of almost 6,000 adult illiterate learners. CASP-PLAN (formed by the two groups CASP and PLAN by putting their efforts together for the development of the resettled slum dwellers) covers about 15 000 people. SHED is another such organization working for overall development, including health and education, of about 8 000 families in the world's largest slum colony of Dharavi.

It would have helped greatly if there had been a directory of NGOs in order to understand who is doing what and for which target group. Although many attempts seem to have been made in Mumbai, from time to time, to develop a directory of NGOs (Desai, 1995; Development Alternatives, 1998; Sappal and Datta, 1999) these directories are either not updated, or they appear to focus more specifically on NGOs in some areas of development, to the exclusion of, or inadequate coverage of, NGOs in other areas. The fact that most NGOs rarely work solely in one area of development at one time, and may focus on different areas from time to time, may also be partly responsible for the lack of agreement among different sources.

Desai (1999) was able to identify and study 67 grass-roots NGOs working among the slum communities of Mumbai for her study in 1994. It is perhaps not possible to ascertain the exact number of NGOs. Desai (1999) states that she used a wide variety of sources to find her sample and the willingness among them to participate in her study 'was high'. The initial pool of NGOs identified by her was perhaps therefore not too much larger than her final sample. Out of the

67 NGOs, 34 listed education as one of the activities that they were engaged in. The majority of NGOs were involved in multiple activities, with most being associated with about three areas of work.

Desai (1999) reports that among the Mumbai NGOs, 33 per cent worked among women and children, while 27 per cent of them focused on women and children as their main target group. Street children were included in the target groups of 14 per cent of the NGOs but were the main focus of only 7 per cent of them. However, most of the larger NGOs (66 per cent) and many of the smaller NGOs (32 per cent) included education on their action agendas.

The directory prepared by the Development Alternatives group appears to have included only those NGOs in primary education who are also working for ecological and environmental concerns. Sappal and Datta (1999) have, for the National Core Group For Deprived Urban Children, been able to put together a list of NGOs working in the area of primary education for the urban deprived children, and according to them there are at least 25 such organizations in Mumbai.

Examples of NGOs serving street and working children

A significant number of organizations are serving street and working children. Interestingly, many of them materialized in the latter half of the 1980s, a period when awareness was generated about the plight of these children on the streets:

- *Amchi Kholi* (literally 'our room') was set up in 1989 by the Women's Committee of the Western Railways in collaboration with *Sneh Sadan*, an organization run by Christian missionaries since 1963. Their objective is to save unattached little children from the cruel life of the streets of Mumbai. Railwaymen and women are acutely aware of the large number of little runaways who seem to just get on to any train to come to Bombay (the city of dreams and movie stars). Whenever possible, children are sent home to parents. Amchi Kholi offers a non-formal educational programme, along with recreation for these children.

- *Hamara Club* ('our club') was established as a field action project of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, a university of repute in Mumbai, in 1989. This NGO has served to provide a base and a place to come home to for about 300 children living on the streets. Through its non-formal education programme, it has been able to admit 30 to 40 children to formal schools.

- *Project Mainstream* is a project of the Rotary Club of Mumbai. Recognizing that street children are the largest group of out-of-school children in Mumbai, this project works with and through 70 other NGOs in Mumbai to reach out to 11 000 children on the streets. It also provides them with credit for setting up some means of income generation.

- *Sneh Sadan* ('home of love') is a rehabilitation home catering to about 300 children. Missionaries have run it since 1963, with funding support from the corporate sector and the public. A network of NGOs passes on street children in need of shelter to Sneh Sadan, which tries to provide them with a family atmosphere and formal schooling.

- *Vatsalya* was established as a field project of Nirmala Niketan, the College of Social Work, in 1982. This project caters to street children through four centres and two shelters. The educational objective of these centres is to induct street children into mainstream education through love and understanding. Through its work with street children, Vatsalya found them to have low levels of interest in education and low concentration. Also, they were easily disillusioned and were given to obstinacy and mood swings. For them, education has to be provided in a creative way, and the teacher has to be more than a teacher. She or he has to be a counsellor as well.

- *Prerna* (meaning 'inspiration') was created as the community extension programme of the Social Service Centre of the Kamathipura municipal school in 1986. This organization was created to facilitate and support the primary education of an excluded group: the children of sex workers. Its outreach extends to about half the ward in which it is situated.

- *YUVA* ('Youth for Voluntary Action') was set up in 1984 and it works mainly for empowerment of the poor and for their rights. As part of its programme, it also runs a home for street children at a railway station in Mumbai, as well as a home for girls. Children living in homes attend formal schools, while YUVA also conducts non-formal education programmes for children in the slums and on pavements.

Other NGOs similar to the ones mentioned above are the *Salaam Balak* trust created by the makers of the film on a street child of Bombay, called 'Salaam Bombay'; the *Shelter Don Bosco*; *St Catherines's Home*; *Support*; etc. Shroff (1997) points out that these NGOs have evolved newer methodologies of intervention based on concrete experience over the past few years. These new methods of intervention have been developed keeping in mind the lifestyle, work life, psychological orientation and readiness of street children to work out solutions to their problems. Shroff feels that the NGOs have made a significant contribution in handling the problem of street and working children. They have provided valuable experiences and innovative ways of intervention.

What is also worth mentioning, is that most of these organizations for street and working children have created city-wide and even inter-city networks among themselves. For example, in Mumbai, there exists, as is the case in New Delhi and in 11 other cities, an *NGO Forum for Street and Working Children*. The idea behind these forums is to share experiences among NGOs, groups and individuals concerned with street children, to unite on issues of common interest for the cause of children's rights and to promote co-ordination and common programmes of action in the areas of health care, education, awareness building, etc.

NGOs concerned mainly with primary education of the urban poor in Mumbai can be counted on the fingers of one hand, but the biggest among them, *Pratham*, has an agenda, and a programme, to reach out to all children in and out of school in all the 23 municipal wards in the city. Another, the *Doorstep School,* aims to achieve universal primary education, but only in one municipal ward. *Parisar Asha* is another 'education NGO' concerned with bringing about improvement in the quality of the educational process in about 300 municipal schools. The relatively smaller players among the educational NGOs include the *Comet Media Foundation,* which produces educational material in different media such as print, film and video and promotes their use through seminars, workshops, and fairs. In their own way, each of these NGOs is seeking to change the educational scene in Mumbai through their diverse objectives, programmes and style of functioning.

The Doorstep School (DSS)

The Doorstep School is a voluntary organization, which was established in 1988 by two members of the faculty of the College of Social Work. The Doorstep School restricts its activities only to the slums of Ward A and works intensively with the slum dwellers, while addressing factors related to the inability of their children to attend school.

The concept of the Doorstep School arose from the realization that many needs of children and their families remained unmet, despite the interventions of the social service centres in the municipal schools. One of the major activities of the social service centres was to visit homes of drop-out children, try to determine the cause of their dropping out and try to bring them back to school. But factors affecting the inability to attend were varied and could not always be influenced directly by formal schools or through social work intervention despite a widespread infrastructure of formal education existing in the city. The need was felt for an alternative method whereby education could reach the children at their doorstep.

The Doorstep School programme therefore started out with a multi-pronged approach that included Balwadis (pre-schools) and mobile libraries, covering all out-of-school children. Non-formal education has been the focus of DSS's activities. But, along with non-formal centres, study classes (extra coaching for children attending school) were also started. With its pre-school programmes, the DSS is thus able to identify children before they reach school age and are able to prepare them for school and enrol them in schools on reaching the eligible age. With its after-school study classes, it is able to help sustain the children within a school once they are admitted.

In this way the Doorstep Schools feel that they are able to facilitate children in achieving 'real access' (as opposed to the virtual illusion of access) to a school which may be available in the neighbourhood, but may not necessarily be attainable and sustainable for many. In the past year, one of its newer programmes has been the 'School on wheels', which is a school in a bus, parking outside neighbourhoods where, for lack of land, a school cannot be built.

The Pratham initiative[2]

Of all the NGOs in Mumbai, Pratham stands out as different. One would even hesitate to use the term 'non-government' for Pratham, because the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, which is 'local government', is one of its 'founders', along with UNICEF, some corporate houses and several prominent individuals. Secondly, it does not seek to supplant the government's efforts in provision of primary education. On the contrary, it firmly believes that it is the duty of the government to provide primary education to the masses. But Pratham wants the government to be successful in doing its job. It sees its role as that of a catalyst to help the process to work faster, more economically, and more effectively. With this aim, Pratham has focused its efforts towards reducing wastage and stagnation in education at the primary stage, towards more efficient use of the funds spent by the government on primary education and towards ensuring that every child enrols and is retained in a school.

This has does through facilitating the setting up of over 2,500 *Balwadi's* (pre-schools) covering over 50,000 children. The approach used by Pratham to set up Balwadis is unique indeed, and with an inbuilt sustainability mechanism. Pratham's workers encourage women in resettlement colonies and slums to open their homes for a couple of hours to tiny children in their immediate neighbourhood, in return for the sum of 200 rupees, which Pratham pays them. For many women this could be their only chance to earn even this small amount. Pratham then trains these Balwadi 'entrepreneurs' in activities to keep the little children happy and learn through fun and games. Once the mothers of the children realize the value of the couple of hours that the child spends at the play school, they are prepared to pay for the service. Thus some Balwadi teachers are now able to earn a little extra from charging the parents for keeping and teaching the children. Children, who start going to Balwadis, are well on their way to enrolling in school when the time comes.

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[2] See the monograph published by IIEP describing the Pratham initiative: Chavan, Madhav. 2000. *Building societal missions for universal pre-school and primary education. The Pratham experience.* Paris: UNESCO/IIEP.

Box IV.1. Amina's 'Balwadi' (pre-school centre)

The slum colony is a fairly new one. It is still relatively less crowded. Manufacturing and cottage industries have not yet found their way here. There is a 'main road', with many other small lanes connecting to it.

Down one of these lanes and almost in the exact centre of a row of eight- by nine-feet 'shelters' is Amina's home-based Balwadi (pre-school centre). It is one of about 1,500 similar Balwadis running in homes and supported by Pratham, in schools, in mandals, in offices of political parties and in temples.

By nine or so each morning, the others in Amina's home have left for work or whatever. She gets her home ready to receive her Balwadi children by cleaning up and clearing as much of the floor area as possible.

Amina is popular with the small kids. She tells them stories, teaches them to sing songs and nursery rhymes and to play games, draw with crayons, etc. Gradually she will teach them many other skills to equip them to cope with formal learning at a later stage. And because she, unlike most other Balwadi instructors, teaches some nursery rhymes in English, the neighbourhood women hold her in awe. Not only is she literate, she can teach nursery rhymes in English! A few games and a little drawing keep the tiny tots busy for almost two hours. Amina, in turn, will be taught how to teach all this through Pratham's training and monitoring team made up of experienced Balwadi instructors. Pratham provides the play and drawing materials and next week, Amina shall be attending a training course organized by Pratham to learn some more activities and ideas to help her interact better with the children.

Two months ago, Amina had jumped at the offer made to her by one of the Pratham workers to open a Balwadi. She would be paid 200 rupees per month and she could charge 10 to 20 rupees for each child. While it wasn't much, it was at least something and she didn't have to travel for it. She had passed the eighth class in the small town she had come from and was glad to become a respectable 'teacher' in a big city.

So far none of the children paid her anything. But once she had her training and the mothers had got used to their 'time off', and the children had proudly prattled their newly learned 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' to upwardly aspirant migrant parents, she would be able to ask the parents for a little money.

In this way, Pratham plans for Balwadis to become self-propelled tiny enterprises in every little colony. The Balwadis in turn help to make 'going to school' a habit with every child by providing the necessary stepping stone.

Khelwadis, or play centres, have also been started in slum areas to attract older children to some form of organized activity or games. Once the children are attracted, it requires only one more step to draw them into educational activities. Children in these play centres who may be interested in learning the three 'R's can be enrolled in a *bridge course* also started by Pratham in the slum areas. Children in bridge courses are gradually inducted into formal schools.

Box IV.2 Bridge course in a temple

In a temple room, just next to the alcove that houses the main deity of the temple, another kind of worship is being offered to the goddess of learning. This temple stands in the middle of a working-class area in central Mumbai. The population of this area lives in multi-storied buildings containing usually only single-room tenements and in unauthorized slums. Most of them are Tamil speaking.

The 'Pratham' NGO has been able to persuade the priest to allow Pratham's bridge course classes to be held in the temple.

Shanti Raja, the bridge course teacher, is a Tamilian herself, but she does not live in the area. She travels down every day by the local train. The bridge course is meant for older children (8-10 years) who have either never enrolled or who have dropped out of school. Right now, about 20 children can be seen huddled in the dimly lit room. Some of them are grouped around a makeshift blackboard.

The other children are 'working' in groups or – judging from their expressions – that is what they were supposed to be doing, but are actually not doing. Whatever it is, the look on their faces shows that they are having a bit of fun with their friends. At least this keeps them interested in coming to the class. No doubt they will gradually become interested enough to want to learn as seriously as the group around the blackboard. In time, they should be able to join an age- appropriate class in a municipal school.

Bridge course classes, such as this, aim at attracting children who are out of school and preparing them over a period of two to six months to join school. In some cases the preparation for school may take longer.

At first, the children in the community are attracted by the organized fun and games at the centre in the community. Gradually these informal activities may begin to include elements of learning. The children are thus slowly inducted into a more formal process of learning. The fun and games also continue, side by side. Younger children may be mainstreamed into formal schooling after only two months, while older children may take some more time.

The bridge course classes, which run for about five hours a day (the length of a school day), include periods of fun and games. The curriculum followed is based on the municipal textbooks to enable the children to transfer more easily.

Many bridge courses are run on school premises. Not only is space easier to find in a municipal school, but these informal classes, when conducted within the school environment, make it easier for the child to successfully achieve the transition to formal school.

Some *remedial classes* have also been started by Pratham for schoolchildren needing extra help to keep up in school. Through its research activities, it has also developed an *idea book* which teachers could use to try out new ways to make learning more fun. Recently it has been able to arrange for the donation of 100 computers to municipal schools and, so far, these have been set up in at least one school building in each zone to provide slum children with an exposure to the electronic mouse and to computer games. Some mathematics software is also available but, so far, its purpose has been to demonstrate to the children that the computer can be a learning tool too.

Pratham works closely with the Education Department of the Municipal Corporation to realize its action plan and motto: *Every school beautiful, Every child in school, Every child learning*. Many of the solutions that are being brought in to remedy the situation of poor learning achievement, poor teacher motivation, and lack of parental involvement, are not new. Solutions such as the community outreach, the pre-schools, etc. were all part of the first experiment tried out by the BMED in collaboration with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and the College of Social Work. Dr Farida Lambay, Professor at the College of Social Work, was associated with the earlier experiment in the 1970s and now, as one of the main moving spirits behind Pratham, continues to spearhead interventions to achieve learning for every child.

The concept of 'Education Post', which has been adopted by the BMED, is also a Pratham initiative. So is the initiative of grouping the children in each class into three achievement groups.

With the help of Pratham, some 'process' changes have also been initiated in schools. For example, an *Education Advisory Committee* comprising representatives of parents and NGOs has been instituted. These education advisory committees have been initiated in an effort to encourage participation of the local people. The committee consists of local citizens, school officials and Pratham representatives (Pratham, 1999). A *Bal Sakhi* ('child's friend') has also been introduced in all municipal schools. The Bal Sakhi programme aims at addressing the problems of teacher absenteeism and student drop-outs. Pratham has trained local women in activities to involve children from Grades I to III in the absence of their teachers. These Bal Sakhis are sent to schools at the request of headteachers and, according to Pratham (1998), they have been a welcome relief for all schools and have allowed headteachers to achieve greater flexibility in meeting the children's needs.

Aided by the Doorstep School and Pratham, the BMED is assured of collaboration and support in the form of pre-schools, remedial teaching centres, bridge courses, etc. As a unique venture this partnership promises good results and will be well worth watching.

Financing

As with NGOs everywhere, NGOs in Mumbai usually rely on more than one source of funding to keep their work going. Different funding sources may be approached to fund different activities of the same NGO. The Doorstep School, for example, is financed by multiple sources – foreign as well as Indian – for its various activities.

Some of the larger multinational companies in India have also recently taken an interest in supporting developmental activities. Pratham manages the finances for its projects both from corporate donors and from others. Some of the corporate houses lend their support by taking some of the leading activists at Pratham on to their payroll and by picking up the bills for various expenses such as travelling, meetings, etc. UNICEF continues to support Pratham in a number of ways – not all of them financial. Pratham has also recently managed to convince the central government and British Airways to lend financial support to its programmes. Since 1985, a Foreign Contribution Regulation has come into being, which has reportedly made it more difficult for NGOs to directly receive foreign funds.

Nevertheless, foreign money reaches NGOs in many indirect ways that NGOs may not be aware of (Desai, 1999). Much of foreign official funding goes to the central government or state government departments, which allocate funds to certain priority areas of development. In addition, some donors have already channelled substantial funds through government to create projects in which NGOs have mutually agreed roles, e.g. the World Bank and UNICEF.

The amount of funding support and the costs which can be covered from funds received also determine which funds are more sought after. Government funding is less popular among NGOs because "State funding is project based and does not cover overhead costs such as staffing, maintenance, building, staff development, training, auditing, book-keeping costs and so on. Thus there is little scope for long-term planning for institution building" (Sen, 1999).

Government funding is also generally perceived by NGOs to be 'unreliable'. The long delays in receiving government funds and the excessive paperwork involved therein, makes the pursuit of government money a very time-consuming activity to secure very little money (Desai, 1999).

Linkages and collaborations

With public institutes

Public institutions play a vital role in sustaining NGO activity. While the limitations of the role that the public institutions can and do play have often been the stimulus for the development of NGO activity, many of the NGOs report an interdependence with government institutions. For example, the teachers learning kits that were used by CORO in its literacy drives in slum areas in Mumbai were developed by the State Resource Centre situated in Pune (Saldhana, 1993). Evaluation of learning was also done through tests developed by the same centre. The Doorstep School reports that public institutions were involved in all stages of its curricular and extra-curricular programmes. The Indian Institute of Education at Pune offered its guidance in the development of a suitable curriculum for its non-formal education classes, while assistant teachers from the Municipal Corporation helped it in preparing the curriculum for its study classes.

Teachers of the Doorstep School were trained in extra-curricular activities at Bal Bhavan, the government centres for recreational activities for children. Later in the year, the Bal Bhavan organized a monsoon camp to teach Doorstep children to draw, paint, sing and make crafts. The Fisheries Department of the Goverment of Maharashtra, when contacted, arranged sessions for imparting of information on fishing and fishing techniques to members of its literacy classes. Evaluation of literacy class students of the DSS was also done by the District Resource Unit (DRU), which is a part of the Indian Institute of Education, Pune, and the children were given a certificate of their educational level. The Education Department of the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika conducts examinations for the non-formal centres run by NGOs and the children are given a mark sheet similar to the ones given to the children attending formal schools of the BMED.

Some NGOs, on the other hand, are less than satisfied with the government support received in their efforts. Shroff (1997), referring to the NGOs working for street children, feels that not much effort has been made by the government for this group. The government and municipal bodies in Bombay have, as yet, no planned intervention for street and working children, though the seriousness of the problem and the need for collaboration, she feels, have now been acknowledged.

Linkages and support from government agencies seem to depend greatly on the development of the rapport of an NGO with particular officials. Therefore, finds Desai (1999), *their successes seem to be localized and may be more easily perceived at the local specific levels rather than in terms of changes in the larger system.* It is due to this that NGO work can often receive a setback when a particular government officer is transferred. It is also believed that *senior staff/ high officials recognize the importance of working with NGOs and understand the issues involved in such collaborations better than staff* *working at lower levels.* Thus the lack of continuity among senior staff in government departments can adversely affect the work of some NGOs. This not only contributes to co-ordination problems among departments, but also costs NGOs time and effort to re-establish their credentials and familiarize new staff with key issues.

Among themselves

In respect of interlinkages and collaboration among themselves, NGOs in Mumbai have been able to come together for the benefit of their target groups. For example, a co-ordination committee for vulnerable children was initiated in February 1989 as an effort to bring together the various micro interventions for street children in Bombay. This committee has facilitated sharing of experiences among the NGOs on a regular basis with a view to promoting collective action on the issue of children's rights (Shroff, 1996). Among the 'Education NGOs', the Doorstep School mobilized a meeting of 30 other NGOs, which has led to the creation of a common platform for discussion and sharing on issues of common concern.

Sometimes other kinds of collaboration may be effected with the sole aim of 'marking-out' respective territorial boundaries of operation. For example, as the Doorstep School believes in building and maintaining interlinkages with other voluntary agencies, it shares information with other organizations. Its children also participate in competitions, fairs and cultural events organized by other NGOs and by the government, etc. But it does not share its 'territory'. This policy of the Doorstep School is based on the rationale that if more than one NGO works for the same purpose among the same target group, not only do they waste resources, but they also risk creating other kinds of problems. When Pratham, a newer, but bigger NGO, sought to work in Ward A (the territory of the Doorstep School), both of them came to an agreement not to duplicate each other's efforts in that particular municipal ward. As a result of this, Pratham works in every Ward in Mumbai except Ward A. In Ward A it works through the Doorstep School.

The happy coexistence of a multitude of organizations all working for the poor cannot but force the question – what does this mean in terms of the role of government departments both in terms of their relationship with the NGOs and in terms of their own role in providing primary education? A look at the size of the groups of beneficiaries of the NGOs should put this question at rest. The 'Hamara Club', for example, benefits about 300 children, Prerna reaches about 100, Sneh Sadan 300, Vatsalya about 1,200. And the Project Mainstream, which supports the work of about 70 NGOs in Mumbai, is able to indirectly benefit 11,000 children.

Though the exact number of beneficiaries is difficult to ascertain, one can say definitely that the number of children that NGOs are able to benefit is a very small number indeed, compared to the magnitude of the problem. Even if all the NGOs in Mumbai were to combine their efforts together, Desai (1999) feels that it is unlikely that more than 20 per cent of the urban poor would be reached. This would be because not only are the efforts not large enough, but all slums do not have NGOs working in them, and one cannot assume that all their efforts can be combined and co-ordinated.

> The government's role in primary education of the poor, one may say therefore, can only be supported but not supplanted. On the other hand, with the advent of NGOs, government and donor collaborations such as Pratham on the scene, it also appears safe to assume that a new era of role relationships in providing primary education to the poor shall be witnessed.

EST COPY AVAILABL

V. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

A city-wide dynamic management information system

The following *Table V.1* showing enrolment was displayed in one school building in which were located four primary schools w, x, y and z teaching in Marathi, Gujarati, Urdu and Hindi medium of instruction respectively.

Table V.1. Number of children in each class in the schools w, x, y, and z in the same building

School (Medium)	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV
w (Marathi)	68	66	68	69
x (Gujrati)	19	16	25	15
y (Urdu)	95	101	85	77
z (English)	65	49	29	26

The pattern of enrolment in each class was intriguing. While enrolment in the Marathi medium was more or less constant in each class, enrolment in the Urdu and the Gujarati medium was seen to taper down on the whole. But, the enrolments in the English medium were the most perplexing. Classes III and IV were but a fraction of the size of Class I. Class I showed as healthy an intake as the other media did. If one can assume that a similar number enrol each year in the English medium, why were there such few children in Classes III and IV?

The teachers in this school had various explanations for this phenomenon. Some said that the children find it difficult to cope with English as a medium of instruction and are therefore more likely to drop out of English-medium classes. Others said that the children in English- medium municipal schools are merely biding their time until they gain admission in a privately managed (but municipal aided and therefore also free from tuition fees) English-medium school of their choice. Which of the explanations is true? Do these children join private schools, or does the English curriculum present more difficulties? Either way, this information could have important consequences for management action.

But, unfortunately, there is no system to gather such information for management decision-making. Even though the Municipal Corporation has a Research and Statistics cell, which collects and maintains data related to the schools and the children, it is a moot point whether the information is collected and processed in such a way as to make it useful for making decisions regarding management strategy. While certain data are collected and published by the Municipal Corporation, they are largely quantitative in nature and relate to the municipal schools only. It would not be possible to say neither whether the children have gone to private schools, nor why they have chosen to do so.

Pratham, an NGO assisting the BMED, has also pointed out the need for an 'on line' information system (Pratham, 1998). Pratham cites the mismatch between a Municipal Corporation study and its own findings on the reasons for drop-out as a case in point. The official reasons for drop-out were found to be: household responsibilities (50 per cent), lack of interest (10 per cent), no school nearby (25 per cent), and other reasons (15 per cent). Pratham's own home visits did not substantiate the municipal data. Pratham workers found that while more than 63 per cent of the drop-outs had either changed residence or had given the wrong address, 4 per cent had left due to illness and only 4 per cent of the drop-outs had left to join the world of work. Significantly, they found that 13 per cent of the drop-outs had changed school. Which schools did they join? Were they municipal or private? Why did they change? The Education Department has no means to find out the answers to such questions as yet.

Pratham is at present assisting the BMED in developing a system of MIS and is training the area-level educational administrators in its use. However, there is a long road to cover before they can answer questions such as 'who is leaving' and 'where are they going'.

Without a city-wide and dynamic information system, vital messages to the authorities such as information about 'who' is joining or leaving which school and most importantly 'why', are lost. Only a true feedback from the market can inform the decision-makers of the utility to the poor of the system of education purportedly running for their benefit.

State v. the state and education of the poor

Another question that may benefit from re-examination, is whether the division of responsibility for education along horizontal strata among the different levels of the state is really acting in the interests of the poor? For example, at present in Mumbai, the primary level of education is the concern of the Municipal Corporation, and the secondary is the concern of the state government, while the responsibility for the pre-primary level has been abdicated to the private sector and the civil society. This stratified division of responsibility has possible implications in respect of equity, misplaced subsidies and sensitivity to people's problems.

Equity

In 1998 in Mumbai, the Municipal Corporation directly ran about 1,250 primary schools (the figure has, since then, reduced to

1,243 schools) and aided another 344 primary schools (see *Table V.2*). The state government, on the other hand, does not directly provide secondary schools. Instead, it provides grants to private bodies to run secondary schools on its behalf. Consequently, while more than half the schools at the primary level are run by the government, at the secondary level, almost all the schools are run by private bodies.

Table V.2. Primary and secondary schools in Mumbai (1998)

	BMC/State	Private management		Total
		Aided	Unaided	
Primary*	1,254	344	576	920
Secondary**	51	749	455	1,294

* Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Yearbook 1998-1999.
** Office of the Deputy Director Education (private secondary schools), Maharashtra state government, 1999.

Municipal primary schools have perforce to enrol all those who apply, but the same may not necessarily be true for the state-funded private management schools. Even though these aided schools may well be affordable for many of the people living in slums; it is well known that the government and the private sector cater to two separate sets of clientele (see Chapter II). It is arguable whether the private bodies managing the aided schools would share the same concerns for equity as the Municipal Government.

These privately managed schools cannot, according to rules, use admission tests to screen children before admission to Class I. Nevertheless, according to Kamat (1999), a former Education Officer, Mumbai Mahanagarpalika, "Many private schools' management usually choose to select the pupils considering their background". However, it is also common knowledge that admissions to these schools are not generally made at the Class I stage, as is the case in municipal schools. Most of such schools have a pre-primary section, which is neither aided nor controlled by the Education Department. It is mostly from these pre primaries that children are directly fed into Class I of the privately managed schools. A child of poor, uneducated migrants would surely have little chance of enrolling in most privately managed schools, whether aided or not.

Misplaced subsidies?

Table V.2 shows that there are more than twice as many aided secondary schools as there are aided primary schools. The Statel government has provided grants to private bodies to run schools, and has made the schooling of girls free from tuition fees at all levels in the state. Many of the schools have sought and received aid only for their secondary sections. In such a situation, many parents may find that while they have paid for their daughter's schooling at the primary stage, when she has moved into Class VIII, they no longer have to pay tuition fees for her. It would be worth examining which social class is benefiting more from this subsidy that the government is providing. While it is true that all social classes have an equal right to benefit from state-provided education, the question that must be asked here is: do the poor also have equal rights and access to this education that is being provided by the state? Secondly, one must also ask to what extent this situation is attributable to the separation of the educational responsibilities of the local and state governments, according to stage of education.

Sensitivity to post-primary transfer

The increasing demand for privately managed schooling may also be related to the stratified division of responsibility among the local and state governments.

As was shown in Chapter II, there is an increase in the share of enrolments of private schools and decrease in the share of enrolment of municipal schools. There is also a large drop-rate out from municipal primary schools, with scarcely a quarter of those enrolled in Class I reaching Class IV. According to an information booklet published by the NGO Pratham, municipal data suggest that the children who drop out leave the system altogether. On the other hand, data also show that 13 per cent of the sample used had left to join other schools.

Some parents have suggested that the preference for privately managed schooling, even among the not so well off, is because the BMC schools provide education only up to Class VII (in fact more than a third of the municipal schools do not go even beyond Class IV). Because of this, the child passing out of Class VII from a municipal school will have to enrol for Class VIII in a private school.

The private schools to which this child will apply will, more often than not, have primary classes of their own which are already feeding into Class VIII. Though there are some places reserved for students from municipal schools, a child wanting admission in a school of his/her choice either has to be exceptionally promising as a student (rare for a child from a poor background), or his/her parents should be able to pay 'bribe money' for admission into Class VIII (again very difficult for a parent of average means).

According to some parents' view therefore, it makes better economic sense for a child to get into a privately managed aided school (having secondary classes) at Class I or, failing that, – to try and secure admission in a private school as early as one possibly can. The cost of fees to be paid in such a school would still be more affordable than the lump sum that, parents' fear will be demanded for admission at the secondary stage. Besides this, there is greater prestige attached to private schooling and peace of mind in not having to worry about finding another school until after the Class X board examination. In fact, this same logic had also been proposed by one of the teachers as an explanation for the dwindling enrolment in English-medium classes in the primary school discussed earlier (see *Table V.1*).

The fact that the Municipal Corporation has, despite its responsibility being limited to the primary stage, opened 51 secondary schools, in response to popular demand, only goes to show that further admission not only *can* be, but is recognized as being, a problem for municipal school students.

Even so, with such poor interfacing between the state-provided primary and state provided secondary schooling (1,243 primary: 51 secondary), it would not be surprising to find the above view making sense to that segment of the population who wants to educate its children beyond the primary stage. This would thus leave municipal schools as a 'choice' only for those who do not value education for their children, or who may not be sure of being able to provide much schooling for them. The educational attainment levels of children of such parents may perhaps not be higher than already seen in municipal schools. The demoralizing effect of the declining population of municipal schools causes them to run the further risk of being known not as schools for the poor, but as 'poor schools'.

Kamat (1999) ascribes another reason for the popularity of the privately managed schools. According to her, "Looking to the importance of English in getting a job and also due to the cosmopolitan society in the metropolitan city, there is heavy demand for English-medium schools, and this is met by private management".

Considering that private management also offers pre-primary schooling, English as a medium of instruction, entry at the pre-primary class stage and freedom from worry thereafter about finding another school midway through schooling, along with free tuition in aided schools (throughout school for girls and until the primary stage for boys), the reasons for the popularity of private schooling and the decreasing demand for municipal schools may not be hard to find.

The question that arises therefore is the following: Is the state not aware of the problems of transition to the secondary stage? Or do its rigid structures not allow it to respond in a manner more relevant to children's need? The present myopic preoccupation of the two levels of the state with their own 'concerns' serves only to highlight the complete divorce in Mumbai between the municipal role for primary education and the state role for secondary education. As in all such divorces, the concern for the needs and welfare of the child is lost somewhere in between.

Teachers, unions and unity for the cause

The teacher in Mumbai – as everywhere else in the world – is the pivot on which the system revolves. The Municipal Corporation in Mumbai is also in the fortunate position of being a good paymaster (it spends 96 per cent of the education budget on salaries) and is able to attract the very best teaching staff.

The job of the municipal schoolteacher, it has been pointed out (Pratham, 1998), is more challenging than most because a large percentage of the children who go to municipal schools are from slum communities, where an atmosphere conducive for promoting academic learning is generally lacking. Therefore, almost all-academic learning for these children has to happen in the four hours that they are in school. This makes the task of the municipal schoolteacher that much harder. This, says Pratham, is all the more reason why the classroom experience should be made more enjoyable for the children so that they develop a keen interest in the classroom activities. Hence, Pratham feels that the classrooms of municipal schools should be more, not less, 'effective productive' than the private schools. Towards this end, a number of alterations in the system have recently been initiated by the Education Department, almost all of them with the help of Pratham.

Resistance is almost an axiomatic reaction to change. It is not surprising therefore to find, here and there, bewilderment at the recent modifications and murmurs of discontent in the BMED. Most vocal in articulating (and prompting) teacher reaction has been Ramesh Joshi, the leader of the teachers' union which represents the majority of the teachers. Latest issues of the newsletter 'Asmita' of the teachers' union are preoccupied with Pratham. Joshi himself also spares no effort in decrying the 'severe attack on municipal schooling' by Pratham. Joshi is quick to add that his objections are not regarding the extra work that teachers have to put in.

What the teachers' union finds objectionable, says Joshi, are the changes *thrust* on the schools without regard to the experience and expertise of the teachers and the heads. An example, he points out, is the Bal Sakhi (or 'children's friend'), a system which, in his view, is being foisted on the municipal schools. Apart from the fact that he considers the 'Bal Sakhi' concept to be a threatening introduction of unqualified 'contract labour' in education for the paltry sum of 500 rupees per month for working five hours a day (in a context where the minimum wage is 7,000 rupees per month), Joshi fears that this may create a precedent in the way the posts are filled in the near future. Thus, says he, not only would unemployment among teachers increase, but also the infiltration of untrained teachers into the municipal school system would ultimately result in the lowering of standards in education.

Joshi also finds objectionable the recent decision of the authorities that the Bal Sakhi should be an essential member of the School Advisory Committee – the new body which has replaced the earlier School Improvement Committee. Not only does Joshi question the need for putting 'old wine into new bottles', as it were, but also, he asks "Are these untrained boys and girls going to give advice to headteachers with 35 years of experience?".

Joshi alleges that pressure now is being exerted on headteachers to get them to ask for Bal Sakhis in their school, to show their acceptance of this Pratham initiative. To get them to do this, it is being linked to the introduction of telephones in the schools. It is alleged by him that, with support from the corporate sector, Pratham was able to provide telephones in each school, but no corresponding arrangement was made for the payment of telephone bills. As a result, the telephones were soon disconnected due to non-payment of bills (except in cases where the school staff pooled in the money to sustain this facility for themselves). Now, says Joshi, the headteachers are being offered payment of the bills of their Pratham-provided telephones, in exchange for the acceptance of Pratham-provided Bal Sakhis.

Of course these are but allegations, and Joshi has many more to present. And one should also not forget that in the coming elections for the teachers' union, a hand on the pulse of the teachers would only strengthen his leadership position.

What is disturbing, however, is that if this is what the teachers' pulse is spelling out, then, something, somewhere, appears to have gone *wrong in the all-important task of carrying the people along in implementing the process of change. Considering the critical importance of the municipal schoolteacher, what this suggests for the sustainability of the changes initiated is a cause for concern not only for the efforts themselves, but also for the cause of education of the poor.*

Who will pay for the education of the poor?

One of the questions that invariably emerges when the efforts made by civil society fructify is "Can this experiment be upscaled successfully?" In the case of large ventures such as the Pratham initiatives in pre school education, remedial teaching, bridge courses, etc., the questions become "How long will the NGOs be able to sustain their efforts? Can and will the Municipal Corporation take on the additional responsibilities for, and expenses of adopting and successfully carrying on these efforts?"

Taking on additional responsibilities and expenses becomes, for any municipal corporation, a budgetary exercise contingent not so much upon economic, as on politico- economic considerations. In the case of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, as mentioned earlier, the bulk of its revenue is generated from its own sources, and it is the richest municipal corporation in India. The value that was placed on primary education in this city may be gauged from the fact that it was in Bombay in 1920 that the first compulsory education Act was passed. In light of this, it may be interesting to see what priority primary education holds on the municipal agenda today.

The municipal budget statement for the year 1998-1999 (Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika, 1999) shows a total expenditure of 4,685.63 crores (468,56.3 million rupees) out of which rupees 377.78 crores, i.e. 8.06 per cent of the total expenditure was on education. It would come as a surprise to many to find that the richest municipal corporation in India, according to its own published records, spends less than a tenth of its total expenditure on education.

Experts differ, as always in such matters, on the actual income and expenditure of the city. For the year 1991-1992, for example, Misra (1998) places the total revenue of the city at 10,325.4 million rupees, whereas Sekhar and Bidarkar (1999) have placed it for the same year at 8,201 million rupees – a difference of over 2,000 million rupees, by not including certain items of the Mumbai budget which are not common to other cities. Obviously the methods used, and the items of income and expenditure which are included or excluded by different experts, can make a great difference to the final figure.

However, on the assumption of internal consistency of methodology used within the same study, a recent research study by Sekhar and Bidarkar (1999) provides some valuable insights into the priorities of the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika, as compared to other cities. To maintain comparability across cities, the researchers claim to have taken care to include only those items of revenue and expenditure that are common to other cities. For example, in the case of Mumbai, budgets that deal with services such as electricity and transport are not included, because these services are not among the functions of municipal corporations in the other cities.

According to Sekhar and Bidarkar (1999) "The allocation of expenditure to different heads indicates the policy priorities of corporations". To study the priorities of five different cities, they have prepared *Table V.3,* which compares the budget allocations of five major cities in India. One may also bear in mind that the city of New York spends 31 per cent of its budget on education.

As may be seen in *Table V.3*, education and related expenses receive only 1.5 per cent of the municipal budget in Mumbai. It is surprising indeed to see that such a low priority is accorded to education even by the richest municipal corporation in India, as compared to other cities. Even if Mumbai may be spending the largest amount on education in actual terms, this amount is but a small percentage of its whole budget and an indication of the low importance it attaches to education.

The same study (Sekhar and Bidarkar, 1999) also compared the allocations to different heads for the years 1992-1993 (*Table V.4*). It was their intention to study whether the priorities of the corporations had changed in any way over the three-year period.

Comparison between *Tables V.3* and *V.4* shows that in the case of Mumbai, the allocations to education and related expenditure have decreased in these three years from 16.9 per cent to 1.5 per cent.

Table V.3. Actual revenue expenditures: comparison of five municipal budgets (1992-1993) ***(percentages)***

Expense head	Ahmedabad	Bangalore	Mumbai	Pune
Administrative expenses	13.6	6.3	3.8	7.6
Education and related expenditure	22.0	5.0	16.9	19.1
Public health	13.3	28.7	18.5	7.6
Loans/debts	16.2	0.5	8.5	2.5
Grants and contributions/subsidy	0.0	0.0	15.2	27.0
Electricity expenses	0.0	5.6	0.2	0.0
Public works	3.7	13.5	1.8	1.9
Other*	31.2	40.4**	35.0	34.3
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Economic and Political Weekly, 15 May 1999, p. 1205, *Table 8* (Sekhar and Bidarkar, 1999).

* Detailed data for Chennai for 1992-1993 or 1993-1994 are not available.

** This item is unduly large because it includes heads of expenditure that are not common to other cities.

Table V.4. Actual revenue expenditures: comparison of five municipal budgets (1995-1996) *(percentages)*

Expense head	Ahmedabad	Bangalore	Chennai	Mumbai	Pune
Administrative expenses	25.3	5.4	4.8	3.2	6.8
Education and related expenditure	1.4	5.2	10.3	1.5	17.4
Public health	19.4	28.4*	36.4*	22.5	7.7
Loans/debts	13.8	3.9	4.0	9.8	1.9
Grants and contributions/subsidy	27.9	0**	-	13.3	32.5***
Electricity expenses	3.2	4.5	11.4	2.2	0
Public works	1.2	16.9	14.0	0	1.5
Other	7.8	35.7****	19.1	43.5****	32.2****
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Economic and Political Weekly, 15 May 1999, pp. 1205, *Table 9* (Sekhar and Bidarkar, 1999).

* Includes solid waste management. For Mumbai it is included in 'other'.

** Gives monthly grants to about 35 institutions and scholarship to various educational institutions. Amount sanctioned per year is 1,09,800 rupees, which is given separately as an appendix in the budget document.

*** Education grants only.

**** This item is unduly large because it includes heads of expenditure that are not common to other cities.

Since actual allocations to the primary education budget have not gone down in real terms, it would appear that when the income of the city grew, it chose not to increase the allocations to education. According to Sekhar and Bidarkar (1999), examination of the trends in revenue income shows that Mumbai's revenue income has been growing at an annual growth rate of 16.5 per cent, which works out to a healthy growth of 6 per cent in real terms.

Once the money is allocated to education, how is the money spent within the municipal education budget? *Table V.5* shows the expenditure of the municipal corporation on education in the year 1998-1999.

Table V.5. BMC expenditure on education (1998-1999) *(in rupees)*

BMC primary	Aided	BMC secondary	Total
3,014,622,000 (81.04%)	415,634,000 (11.17%)	28,916,400 (7.7%)	371,972,400 (100)

Source: Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika Yearbook, 1999.

As may be seen in the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika education budget, a fifth of the money still does not flow towards primary education of the urban poor. Almost 8 per cent goes towards ***secondary*** education, even though secondary education is not a required function of the Municipality. Another 11 per cent is spent on grants aiding private primary schools who may, or may not, be providing education to the poorer sections of the city. Only about 81 per cent of the money allocated goes towards municipal primary education.

Then again, what does this money buy? Does it buy more textbooks, stationery, games, computers? Sekhar and Bidarkar (1999), in their analysis of municipal budgets again present interesting insights into how the Mumbai education budget is spent and how it compares with the way other cities are spending theirs (see *Table V.6*).

Table V.6. Composition of expenditures on education (1995-1996) *(percentages)*

Expense head	Ahmedabad	Bangalore	Chennai	Mumbai	Pune
Administrative expenses	0.69	0.04	4.73	1.35	0
Salary and other related expenditure	4.83	96.64	42.72	78.07	12.58
Operating expenses	0.22	2.55	0.79	0.59	1.64
Equipment	0.03	0	5.41	1.15	0.53
Grants and public institutions	94.03	*	37.45	6.97	85.08
Other	0.19	0.77	8.7	11.86	0.16
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Economic and Political Weekly, 15 May 1999, pp. 1205, Table 10 (Sekhar and Bidarkar, 1999).

* The budget book lists 35 institutions receiving grants, in an appendix but not in the main document.

It is no surprise - most of the money goes towards salaries. The composition of expenditure on education (*Table V.6*) as compared to the other cities, shows that only Bangalore spends more than Mumbai on 'salary and other related expenses', while another major chunk of expenditure (11.86 per cent) is listed under the 'other' expenditure category. Administration, operating expenses, and grants to public institutions, take up another 8.9 per cent (1.35 + 0.59 + 6.97 per cent) of its budget, leaving only 1.15 per cent for it to buy equipment for its schools.

In recent years, there has been, hopefully, a growing realization of the importance of universal primary education for development. Is more money now being diverted to municipal primary schools than before? To answer this, one may take a look at *Table V.7*, which compares the expenditures within the municipal education budget in 1985-1986; 1995-1996; and in 1998-1999.

Table V.7. Expenditure within the municipal budget for education *(percentages)*

Year	Expenditure on primary	Expenditure on aided primary	Expenditure on municipal secondary
1985-1986	89.5	1.4	9.1
1995-1996	82.9	9.2	7.9
1998-1999	81.1	11.2	7.8

Source: MCGM, Yearbooks, and various years.

Table V.7 presents final confirmation, if any were needed, of the low priority given to primary education of the poor. In the years between 1985 and 1998, a drop of more than 8 per cent has taken place in expenditure on municipal primary schools, whereas, in the same period, the grants to private management to run primary schools rose by almost 8 per cent, i.e. from 1.4 per cent to 11.2 per cent.

When the educational expenditure of the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika shows only too well the declining priority accorded to the education of the poor in recent years, with what hope, one wonders, can one anticipate that additional responsibility for pre-school education, remedial classes and other NGO efforts will be taken over by the Municipal Government?

For the present, these activities will be funded through a grant from the Central Ministry for Human Resource Development and funds from UNICEF/British Airways in 1999-2000. After that, who knows, maybe the state, local government or civil society, or all three together, will find the resources to keep the efforts going.

Conclusion

Not for nothing, perhaps, has Mumbai been called the city of dreams and, therefore, of hope. It is hope that brought the migrants flocking to the city in search of their fortune. It is hope that things will yet change that keeps them there. Despite the declining priority given to primary education by the municipal corporation, primary education in Mumbai survives nevertheless, with a little help from its friends. The civil society of Mumbai, probably as big-hearted as the best in the world, continues to keep the attention of the civic authorities (and of the rest of the world) focused on the needs of the city's poor. Governments and bureaucracies, the world over, have traditionally been slow to change. It is in its people that the strength of this city lies. The people have the desire, and the will, to meet the challenge set by the task of primary education and, because of them, there is hope for the poor.

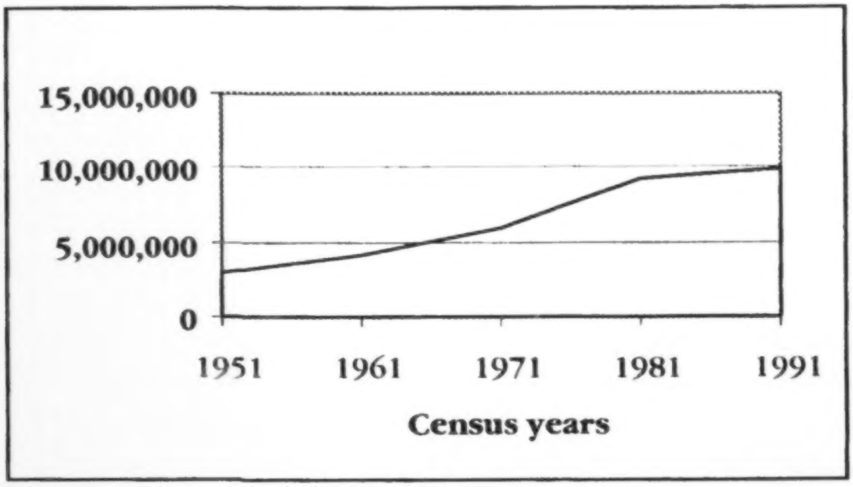
APPENDIX

Mumbai: Primary education of the poor

Population and enrolment

Area	603 sq. km.
Population	9.926 million (Census, 1991)
Population density	16,461 per sq. km. (Census, 1991)

Mumbai: Growth of population (1951-1991)



Source: Census of India (1991).

The rate of growth
of the population of Mumbai
has shown a decline
in the past decade or so...

...even so rough estimates
indicate that more than half
of the city's population lives
in slums or in slum-like
conditions.

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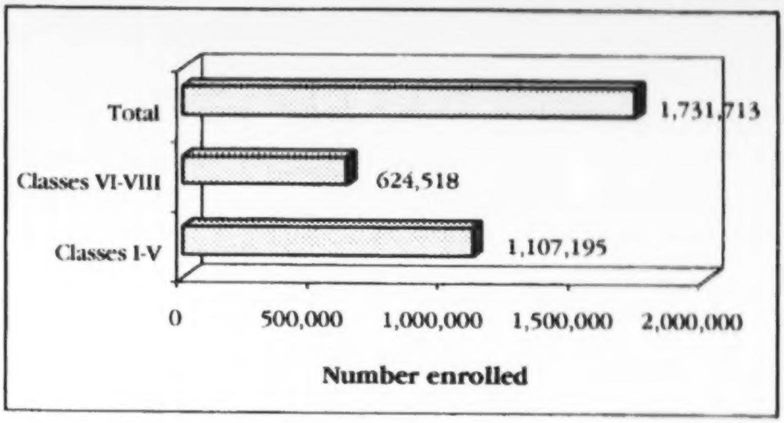
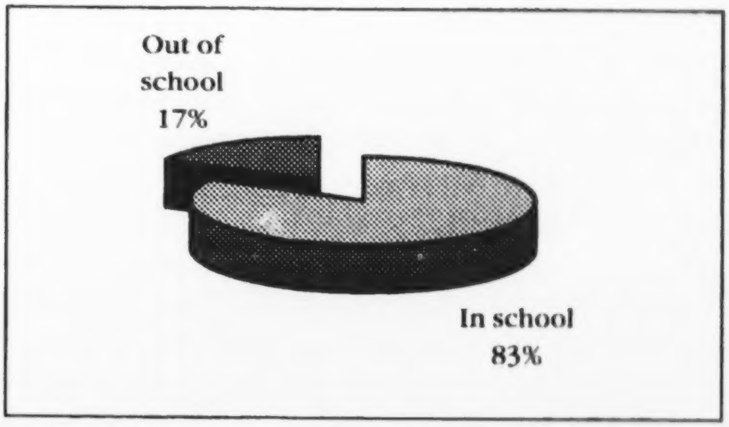
Number of children enrolled in schools in Mumbai (1998-1999)



In 1998-1999 more than 1.73 million children were enrolled in Classes I-VIII

Source: Government of Maharashtra (2000).

Mumbai: Out-of-school children (6-13 years) (Census, 1991)



According to the last Census (1991), 17.25% children in the 6-13 years age group were out of school.

Source: Census of India (1991). Computed on the basis of Census data available by single year of age.

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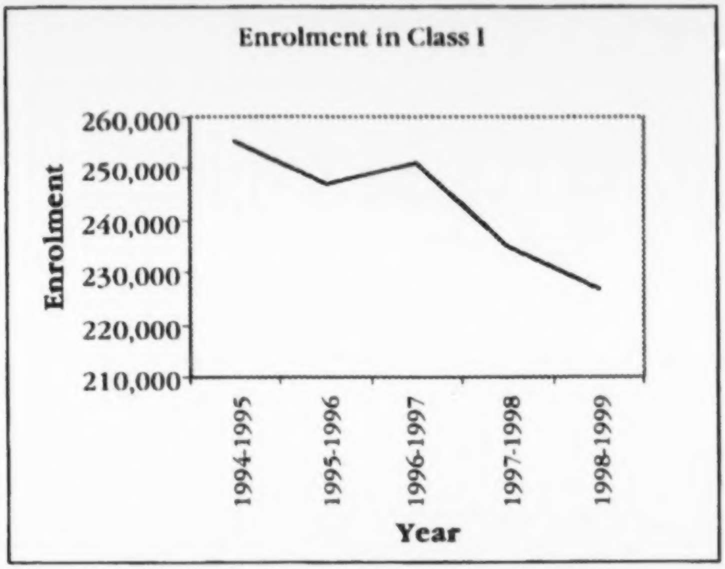
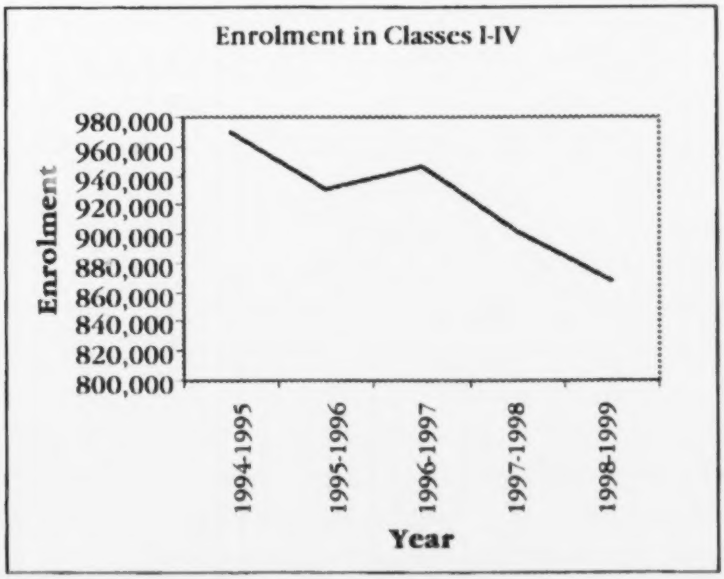
Mumbai: Total enrolment (1994-1999): Class I, and Classes I-IV



The number of children enrolled in primary schools in Mumbai has declined in recent years.



Source: Government of Maharashtra (various years).

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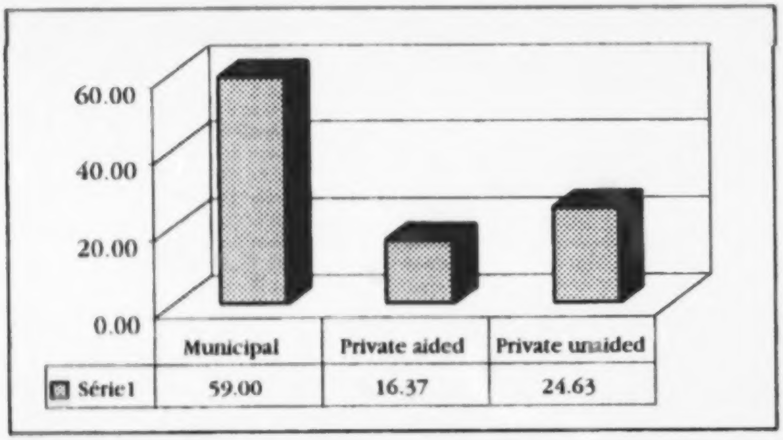
Different providers of education and their share of enrolment

Mumbai: Types of primary schools and their enrolment (1998-1999)

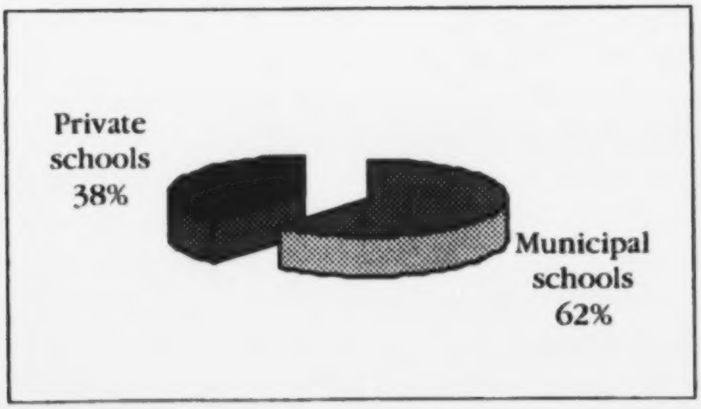
Though municipal schools enrol more children than either private aided or private unaided schools.



Source: Government of Maharashtra (2000).

> ...the share of enrolment in municipal schools is decreasing in comparison to schools under private management.

Mumbai: Change in share of enrolment in schools under different management



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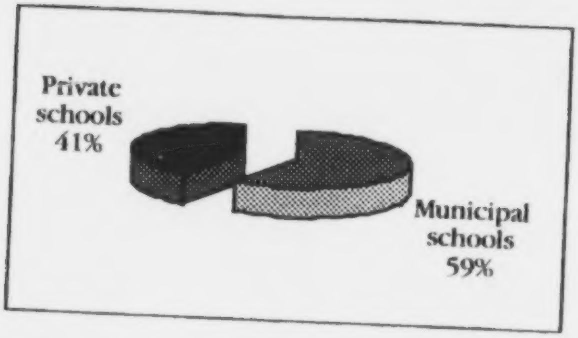
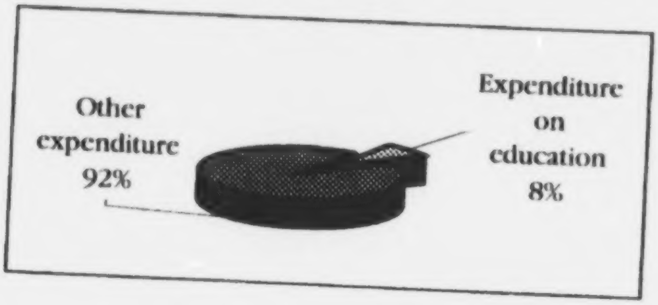


Source: Government of Maharashtra (various years).

Expenditure on Education

Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika: Expenditure on education (1998-1999)



Though the Municipal Corporation of the city of Mumbai is not dependent on external grants, expenditure on education accounts for only 8% of its total expenditure.....

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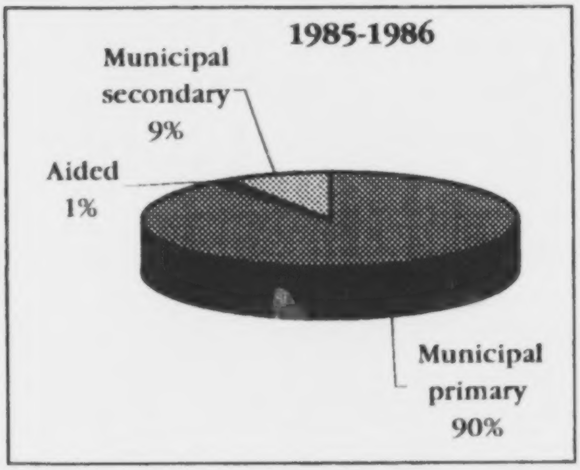
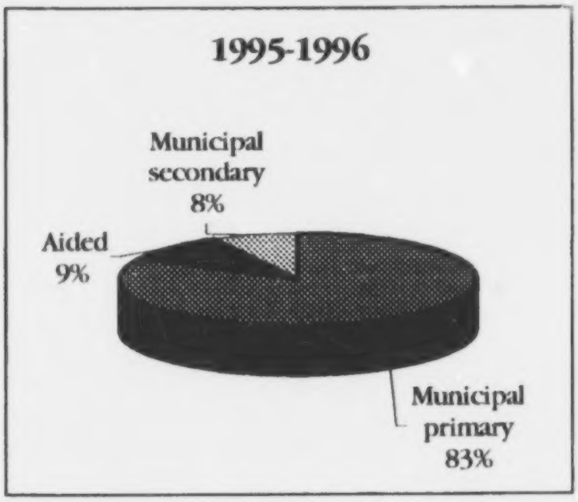
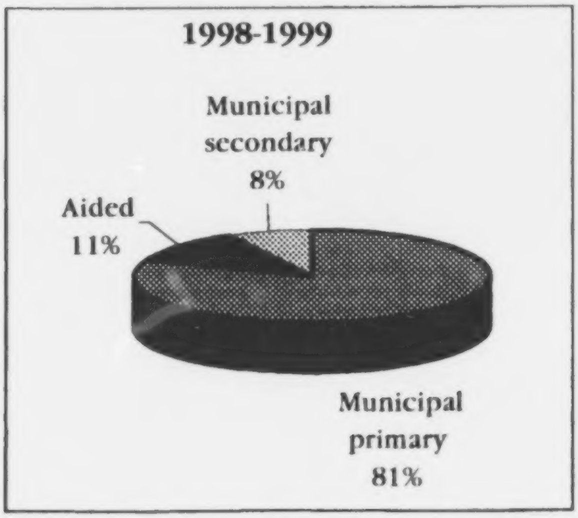
Brihanmumbai Mahanagarpalika: Decreasing expenditure on Municipal primary schools







...and over the years, the percentage of its expenditure on municipal primary schools is seen to be decreasing, especially in comparison with its expenditure on aided primary schools.

Source: B.M. Yearbooks (various years).

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The book

What has made Mumbai the way it is today? What does it mean to be poor in Mumbai? How does poverty in Mumbai affect the victims' chances of benefiting from basic education?

The Municipal Corporation recognizes its own limitations in the struggle to reach each and every child. It is, therefore, making strong efforts to build partnerships with voluntary organizations to meet those challenges related to achieving universal elementary education.

But despite the valiant efforts being made by both public and private actors, illiteracy, non-enrolment and drop-out continue to plague the system. The proportion of out-of-school children in the 6 to 11 year- old age group has been estimated at about 30 per cent.

This monograph looks at the different implications of this situation for public authorities in relation to their role in the provision of primary education, as well as their relations with the various other actors working with the poor in the city.

After focusing on the interplay between poverty, education and the city, the study reviews the roles of the two major groups of actors working for the attainment of universal primary education in Mumbai: the Municipal Corporation and the Non-Governmental Organizations. A special emphasis is placed on linkages between these different actors. The study concludes by highlighting some of the areas where change is clearly needed and by making suggestions on how to bring about these changes.

The author

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Primary education for all
in the City of Mumbai, India
The challenge set
by local actors

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